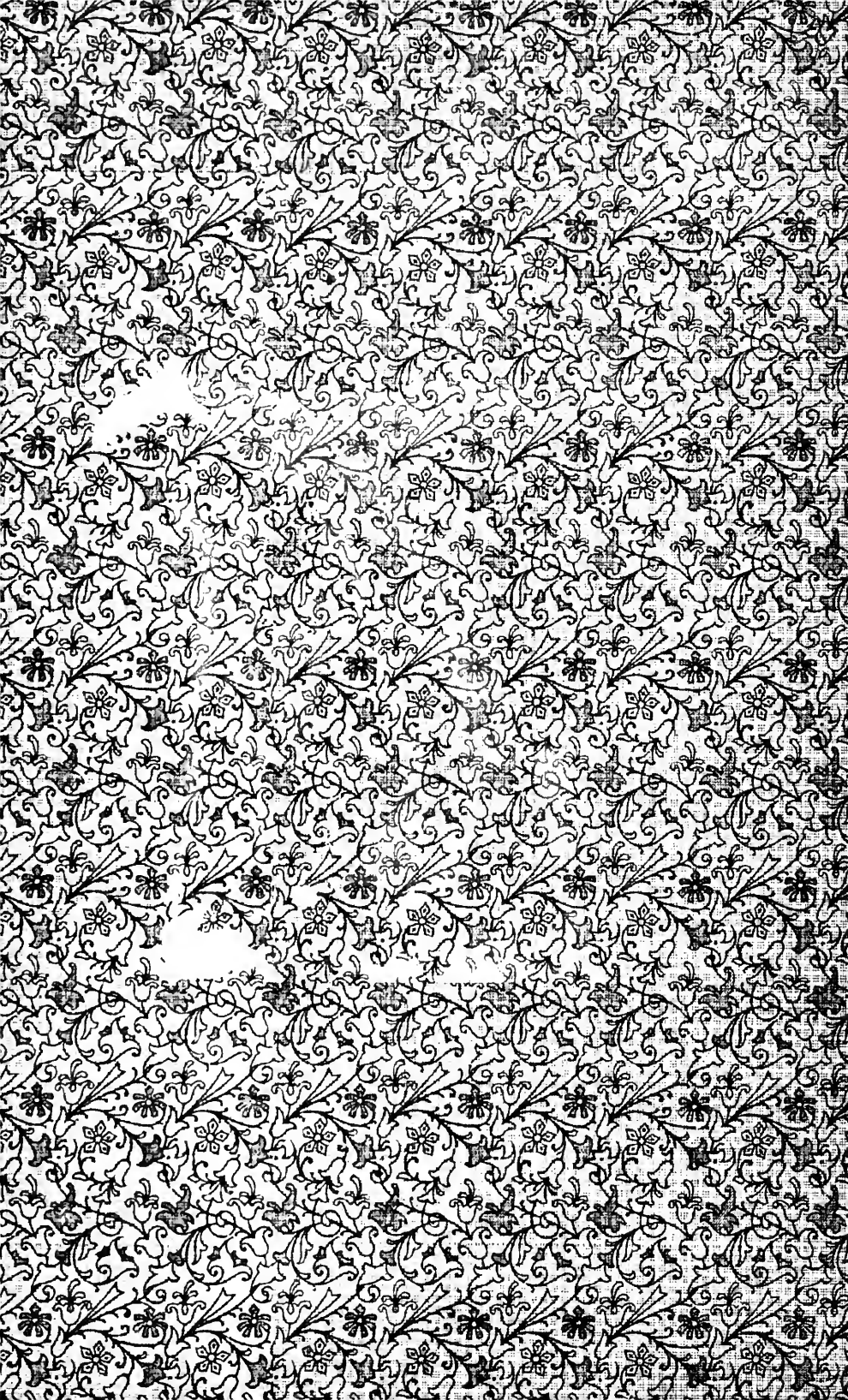
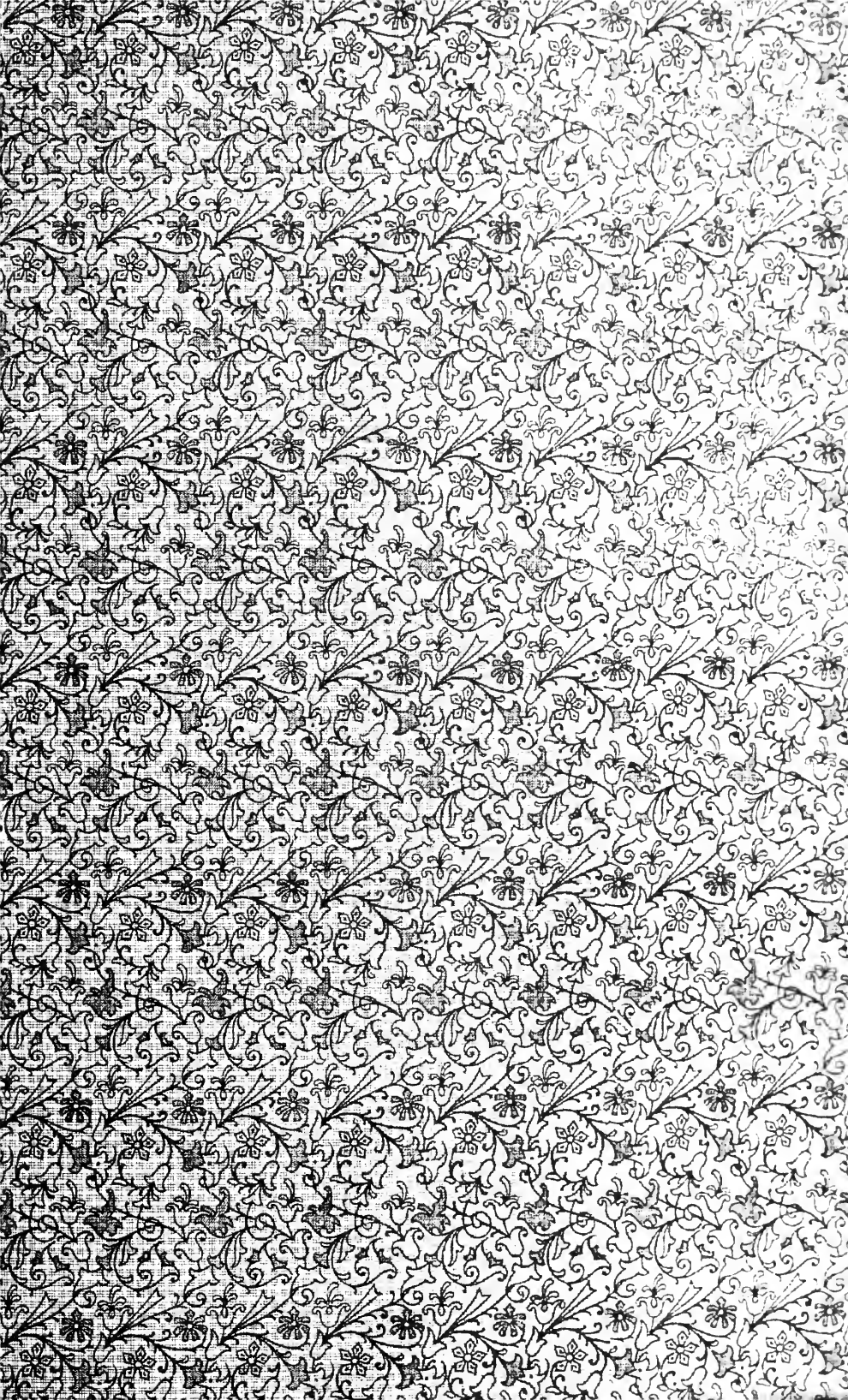


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AN  
HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT

*The Opening*

OF THE

VILLAGE LIBRARY OF FARMINGTON, CONN.,

SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1890,

BY

JULIUS GAY.





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HARTFORD, CONN.:  
THE CASE, LOCKWOOD & BRAINARD COMPANY, PRINTERS.  
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## ADDRESS.

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WE have met this evening to open, to the use of the public, the library which the generosity of the citizens and friends of this village has instituted. By way of introduction, a brief account has been thought fitting of an older library founded here a century ago, of the men who organized it, and of the literary taste of their times.

There have been other libraries in this town also well-deserving consideration, if time permitted. Seven were in active operation, in the year 1802, with an aggregate of 1,041 volumes on their shelves, costing \$1,241. The most recent library is too well-known to you all to need any eulogy or description from me. If the Tunxis Library had not attained its remarkable prosperity, there is little reason to suppose we should have been here this evening.

In the year 1795, when the Revolutionary War had been a thing of the past for twelve years, the people of this village found time to turn their energies to peaceful pursuits. The long and bitter contentions in the church had just given place to peace and goodwill by the settlement of the beloved pastor, the Rev. Joseph Washburn, in May of that year. The Hon. John Treadwell of this town, afterward Gov. Tread-

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well, was at this time a member of the upper house of the State Legislature, and John Mix, Esq., had just begun to represent the town in the lower house twice each year as certainly as the months of May and October came around. These worthy and public-spirited men, with such assistance as their fellow townsmen were ready to offer them, founded, in that year, the first library in this village of which we have any extended record. They called it "The Library in the First Society in Farmington," and this library, with sundry changes in name and organization, has survived to the present time.

The first librarian was Elijah Porter, a soldier of the Revolution, who served three years with the Connecticut troops on the Hudson, and was for many years a deacon in the Congregational Church. The members of the first committee were Martin Bull, John Mix, and Isaac Cowles. Martin Bull, also a deacon of the church, was a man of versatile powers and occupations, — a goldsmith and maker of silver spoons and silver buttons, a manufacturer of saltpetre when it was needed in making gunpowder for the army, a conductor of the church music with Gov. Treadwell for assistant, the treasurer of the town for eight years, and clerk of probate for thirty-nine years, and until the office passed out of the control of the old Federal party. He was one of the seventy signers of an agreement to march to Boston, in September, 1774, to the assistance of our besieged countrymen, if needed. Of all his numerous occupations, perhaps none pleased the worthy deacon more than writing long and formal letters to his



friends. One series of fifteen to a student in college, full of kindly feeling and pious exhortation, has come down to us, but whose appalling solemnity would tend to drive the modern college youth into any dissipation for relief.

John Mix, the second member of the committee, was a graduate of Yale College, and an officer in the Revolutionary War, serving first as ensign along the Hudson, and afterward as lieutenant and quartermaster in the Highlands until the close of the war. Then, when the return of peace dismissed the officers of the army to their homes, and the strong friendships formed around the camp-fire and on the battlefield led to the founding of the Society of the Cincinnati, John Mix became the Secretary of the Connecticut branch, until that society was dissolved, in 1804, to appease the insane clamors of the politicians of the day. He then served the town ten years as judge of probate, thirty-two as town clerk, and twenty-six as a representative to the General Assembly. Those were the good old days when the magistrate and his duties were looked up to with veneration, and rotation in office had not become a political necessity. This old town was then a power in the land.

Isaac Cowles, the third member of the committee, was a farmer, a tavern keeper, a colonel in the State Militia, and a man of wealth.

The library company numbered thirty-seven members, who contributed 380 volumes, valued at \$644.29, which amount was six-sevenths of one per cent. of the assessed value of all the property in the

First Society of Farmington. The books were in part the remains of a former library formed Aug. 1, 1785, of which no record, except this date and the amount of money collected, has come down to us. The first book on the list was Dean Swift's Tale of a Tub. Other works of fiction were his Gulliver's Travels, The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves of Smollett, The Sentimental Journey of Sterne; Henry Brookes' Fool of Quality; Fielding's Tom Jones; Miss Fanny Burney's Evelina and Cecilia; Dr. Moore's Zeluco; and Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield. There were translations of Gil Blas, and of several French novels; The Tales of the Castle and the Adelaide, and Theodore of Madame De Genlis, and others of a more ephemeral nature.

Of poetry, they had, of course, the Paradise Lost, Pope's version of the Iliad, Young's Night Thoughts, and Goldsmith's Poems. There were, too, McPherson's Ossian, The Task and Olney Hymns of Cowper, Thomson's Seasons, and the poems of Akenside.

The list is not a long one, for the New England mind did not take kindly to works of the imagination. Being appealed to on their patriotic side they bought with alacrity The Conquest of Canaan by President Dwight, and the Vision of Columbus by Joel Barlow, — those two epic poems which were thought to be so inspired by the Genius of American Liberty as to put to shame all the works of effete monarchies and empires. To these they added the poems of General David Humphreys, revolutionary soldier and diplomatist, and a volume of miscellaneous American

poetry, which completed the list, nor did they see occasion to make any additions until twenty years after, in 1817, they bought Thomas Moore's *Lalla Rookh* published that year.

History fared a little better. Robertson was represented by his *Histories of America, Scotland, and India*, and his *Reign of Charles the Fifth*. Even Voltaire was admitted with his *Charles the Twelfth* and his *Age of Louis the Fifteenth*. Rollin's *Ancient History* appears in ten volumes, and Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews* in four volumes. Hume's *History of England*, Watson's *Philip the Second*, and Winthrop's *Journal* were there, — the latter now a valuable prize when found in the edition of that day. There were histories in many volumes of almost all the then known countries of the world, — Europe, Greece, Rome, England, Spain, America, Switzerland, and Hindostan, but by whom written we can only conjecture. The volumes have long since disappeared, and the catalogue is silent.

Of biographies, there were those of Mahomet, Cromwell, Frederick the Great, Eugene, Newton, Doddridge, Boyle, Franklin, and Putnam. Of books of travel, there were Anson's *Voyage around the World*, Cook's *Voyages*, Wraxall's *Tour through Europe*, Volney's *Travels in Egypt and Syria*, Niebuhr's *Travels in Arabia*, Cox's *Travels in Poland, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark*, and Young's *Travels in France*, which latter has been recently reprinted, and is one of the notable books of the day.

Any one could make a list of the essay literature

on the shelves without much danger of going astray. The Tatler, The Spectator, and the Citizen of the World constituted pretty much the whole of it.

Of dramatic literature there is not much to say. The first copy of Shakespeare waited twenty years for admission to the library. Our forefathers did not love the theater or its literature.

Theological books were more to their taste. I will not weary you with a list of those which formed a large part of their first library. The most famous were Butler's Analogy, Edwards "On the Freedom of the Will," "On Justification by Faith Alone," his "Treatise Concerning the Religious Affections," and his "History of the Redemption"; Hopkins' Divinity; Paley's Evidences and his *Horæ Paulinæ*; Newton, on the Prophecies; West, on the Resurrection; Strong, on Baptism; and Sherlock's Practical Discourses on Providence. There were also sermons by Blair, Newton, Edwards, and other divines.

Such were the 380 volumes with which the first library was opened to the public. For a quarter of a century thereafter the books added were, with few exceptions, of a theological character. With the exception of "Don Quixote" and "Sir Charles Grandison," added in 1799, no more novels were bought until Miss Hannah More's "Coelebs in Search of a Wife" found favor in 1809, probably owing to the religious character of its authoress; and so matters continued until the Waverley Novels knocked too hard at the doors to be denied admission.



Why did the intelligent men and women of this village restrict themselves to such a literary diet?

Certainly not in a sanctimonious spirit, or because they thought it pleasing in the sight of Heaven, but simply and wholly because they liked it. Not the religious and moral only, but all classes alike discussed the subtle distinctions of their theology with an excitement and too often with a bitterness unknown even to the modern politician. They held stormy debates on these high themes by the wayside, at the country store, and over their flip and New England rum at the tavern. They thoroughly believed their creed — believed that the slightest deviation from the narrow path they had marked out for their steps would consign them to the eternal agonies of a material hell. Such was their belief and such the literature that pleased them.

Even the young ladies of the day read the works of Jonathan Edwards, as the records show. But let no one picture them only as Priscilla singing the Hundredth Psalm at her spinning wheel, or waste unnecessary compassion on their gloomy puritan surroundings. The same ladies danced with the French officers of the army of Rochambeau by the light of their camp-fires, down on the Great Plain, with the approbation and attendance of their fathers, and even, as tradition says, of the courtly minister of the church.

We know from old letters, carefully treasured, how Farmington society spent its evenings, at what houses the young ladies were wont to gather, what they did, and what young men, with more money than brains,

were frowned upon for stopping on the way at too many of the numerous taverns then lining our street. We know how Gov. Treadwell fined the society ladies of his day because, as the indictment read, "They were convened in company with others at the house of Nehemiah Street, in said town, and refused to disperse until after nine o'clock at night." The nine o'clock bell meant something in those days.

Only a few years later, the Governor writes in a strain worthy of John Ruskin, "The young ladies are changing their spinning wheels for forte-pianos and forming their manners at the dancing school rather than in the school of industry. Of course, the people are laying aside their plain apparel, manufactured in their houses, and clothing themselves with European and India fabrics. Labor is growing into disrepute, and the time when the independent farmer and reputable citizen could whistle at the tail of his plough with as much serenity as the cobbler over his last, is fast drawing to a close. The present time marks a revolution of taste and of manners of immense import to society, but while others glory in this as a great advancement in refinement, we cannot help dropping a tear at the close of the golden age of our ancestors, while with a pensive pleasure we reflect on the past, and with suspense and apprehension anticipate the future."

Such was social life then. Much hearty enjoyment of the increasing good things around them, tempered and always overshadowed by their ever

present belief in the stern doctrines of Calvin—"fixed fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute."

The meetings for the drawing of books were held on the first Sunday evening of each month, not because the eminently religious character of the library became that day, but because our ancestors read on the first page of Holy Writ that the evening and the morning were the first day, and when they saw the last rays of the setting sun disappear behind the western mountains, the Sabbath with all its restraints was ended. The boys might resume, though somewhat quietly, the sports of the week. Those of older growth were expected to present themselves in all the bravery of their Sunday attire wherever their youthful affections called them, and they, both young men and maidens, doubtless blessed the new library as a most suitable place of resort for their elders. Hither they came from far and near, not simply for books, but to exchange friendly greetings, to discuss the affairs of the State and the Church, the health of their families, the labors of their farms, and all the details of their everyday life. It was a true literary club made up of the most intelligent and worthy members of the community.

When all were assembled and had accounted for the books charged them, the new books, or any old ones desired by two persons, were put up at auction, and the right to the next month's reading was struck off for a few pennies, adding on the average \$2.50 to the annual income of the company.

Deacon Porter kept the library in excellent order.

Every volume, though originally bound, as books then were, in full leather, had a stout cover of sheep skin sewed around it. The reader who turned down a leaf to keep his place while reading was fined a penny, and a strict record was kept of every grease spot or other blemish, giving the volume and page where it occurred, so that any new damage could be charged upon the offender with unerring certainty. Two pence a day was the cost of forgetting to return books on time. It made no sort of difference who the unlucky offender was, be he of high degree or otherwise, he had to pay. Major Hooker pays his sixpence, Col. Noadiah Hooker his shilling, and even Gov. Treadwell is reminded that it has cost him five shillings and sixpence for forgetting his books a whole month. Solomon Whitman, Esq., reading the fourth volume of Rollin, probably with a tallow dip in one hand, sets fire to the book and comes so near bringing the wars of the Persians and Grecians to an abrupt termination, that he has to pay one dollar. Dr. Todd is fined one-half as much for having his mind so occupied with his patients as to forget his books for six days. The fines for ten years amounted to £1 3 6.

On the first day of January, 1801, the first day of the new century, the name of the library was changed from The Library in the First Society in Farmington to The Monthly Library in Farmington, probably to distinguish it from some other library. Deacon Martin Bull, still the chairman of the committee, engraved for it a new book plate in the highest style of his art.



It contains the by-laws of the company and this motto :

“The youth who led by Wisdom’s guiding hand  
 Seeks Virtue’s temple and her law reveres,  
 He, he alone in Honour’s dome shall stand  
 Crowned with rewards and raised above his peers.”

Wisdom is represented in the central picture in the form of the god Mercury leading a very small boy up to a book-shelf of ponderous folios. The boy is dressed in the fashionable court costume of the period, and with uncovered head contemplates a personification of virtue crowned with masonic insignia. By her side stands a nude figure of wondrous anatomy, perhaps a siren against whose allurements the youth is being warned.

The books were kept in the house of the librarian, which stood on the east side of the main street, next north of the graveyard, and here sat Deacon Porter, the village tailor, in this solemn neighborhood and among these serious books ready to minister to the literary taste of the community. In the meantime the beloved pastor, Joseph Washburn, died on the voyage from Norfolk to Charleston, whither he had gone in the vain hope of restoring his health, and on the 23d day of August, eight years afterward, Deacon Porter married the widow and moved into her house opposite, now occupied by Chauncey Rowe, Esq. He relinquished his care of the library, and Captain Luther Seymour succeeded him for the year 1813. At the end of the year the Monthly Library Company came to an end. The furniture was sold and the cash on

hand to the amount of \$54.93 was divided among the proprietors. A few weeks later, on the 12th of February, 1814, Deacon Porter was reinstated in office, the books set up in the kitchen of his new abode, and, as was the fashion of the times when any dead institution started into new life, after the manner of the fabled bird of mythology, which is supposed to arise from its own ashes, they called the new institution the Phoenix Library. Nine years after, it was incorporated under that name, January 28, 1823, by leaving a copy of its articles of association with the Secretary of State.

Contemporaneously with this, another library called the Village Library, also holding its meetings on the first Sunday evening of each month, had existed for many years. The leading spirits of the company were Capt. Selah Porter at the center of the village, Capt. Pomeroy Strong at the north end, and John Hurlburt Cooke at White Oak. Its records date back to January, 1817, but I was told some thirty years ago by Capt. Erastus Scott, then one of the most prominent men of the town, that he and his fellow school-mates were the real founders. They met on a Saturday afternoon under the church horse-sheds, and each contributing ten cents, began the purchase of the little volumes entitled "The World Displayed." This selection seems to indicate a reliance on the literary taste of the schoolmaster; but when the next purchase was made, the true boy's instinct asserted itself, and Robinson Crusoe was the result. These and some subsequent purchases were the nu-

cleus, he said, of the Village Library. The accuracy of Capt. Scott's recollection seems to be sustained by the list of books bought from the Village Library at its dissolution in 1826. Two of the twenty volumes of "The World Displayed," the boys' first purchase, are still in existence bearing the book plate of the Village Library, a work of art probably beyond the skill of Deacon Bull. It substitutes for his awkward boy a self-possessed young lady seated in an arm chair in the most approved position taught by the boarding schools of the day. She is absorbed in a book taken from the library shelves at her side, and through the window of the room has before her the inspiring vision of the Temple of Fame crowning the summit of a distant mountain. Beneath is the motto —

"Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll,  
Charms strike the sense, but merit wins the soul."

Thus early did the Village Library recognize the value of female education.

In March, 1826, the Village Library was merged with the Phoenix, and Capt. Selah Porter, who since 1817, and perhaps longer, had been its librarian, now took the place of Deacon Elijah Porter. He held the office until he resigned April 4, 1835, and Simeon Hart, Jr., was appointed in his stead, and it was voted that the books be removed to the house of the latter. The affix of Jr. sounds strangely to those who remember the venerable and beloved instructor of our youth better as Deacon Hart,—a name which brings back to many hundreds of men scattered all over the world

the recollections of the wise teacher, the kindly director of their sports as well as studies, the high minded man trusting the honor of his pupils and worthy of all honor in return. Deacon Hart had just finished his twelfth year as principal of the Farmington Academy, and one month after his appointment as librarian "Commenced," as he wrote, "a Boarding School in my own house, May 1, 1835." This new departure of his so occupied his time that on the 6th of March he felt it necessary to resign, and Rufus Cowles was appointed in his place, filling the office until the company came to an end and was reorganized on the 18th day of February, 1839, under the name of the Farmington Library Company. The library was given a room in what was then the northeast corner of the lower floor of the old Academy building, and Rev. William S. Porter was installed as librarian, which office he filled until March 1, 1840, when he was succeeded by Mr. Abner Bidwell.

Under this administration the library comes within the limit of my personal recollection. The meetings were held on the first Sunday evening of the month immediately after the monthly concert. To this missionary meeting came the patrons of the library from the Eastern Farms, from White Oak, and from most of the districts of the town, each with his four books tied up not unusually in a red bandanna handkerchief. Here we waited, more or less patiently, the men on the right hand and the women on the left, while Deacon Hart gave us a summary of missionary intelligence for the month, and the Rev. William S. Porter elucidated

his views of family government and the divine promises to faithful parents. Then, when Dr. Porter had expounded some suitable portion of the Scriptures and invoked the blessing of God on us and on all dwellers in heathen lands, when the choir in the northeast corner of the hall had concluded our devotions with the Missionary Hymn, a large part of the meeting repaired to the library room below. Here were the books, a thousand or more, some in cases, some on benches, some on a big table, some in rows, some in piles,—but all scattered without regard to character or size or numbering in a confusion that would have astounded the orderly soul of Deacon Elijah Porter. The books purchased during the last month were announced and the first reading of each was determined by a spirited auction at which every book was described as a “very interesting work.” Then after tumbling over the book piles with varying success, and with the excitement unknown in more orderly collections, of possibly unearthing some unexpected treasure, each had his four books charged, and departed to enjoy the spoils of his search.

This chapter in the history of the library was abruptly terminated in 1851 by a change in the ownership of the building in which it had its temporary home. The old building and the adjoining premises were owned jointly by the Academy Proprietors, the First Ecclesiastical Society, the Middle School District, and the town. The upper room was used for all sorts of purposes. The Sunday-school boy saw its walls adorned with the big placards which

taught him "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth," and that "The wages of sin is death," but his mind was much more apt to dwell on the grotesque exhibitions he had seen and heard from the same benches the evening before,—the political orator, the ventriloquist, the negro minstrel, the mesmerist, the uncouth magic lantern pictures, and the war dance and war-whoop of imitation red men. The situation became so intolerable that the Ecclesiastical Society, after no end of skillful diplomacy and hard work on the part of Deacon Simeon Hart, bought out the other owners, and the upper room was dedicated to religious uses only, by a vote which will not seem strict to those who remember the abominations of the past. The money changers in the holy temple at Jerusalem were most respectable by contrast. From the Academy building the books were removed to the office of Deacon Simeon Hart, who was appointed librarian once more, February 7, 1853, only twelve weeks before his death. He was succeeded by Austin Hart, Esq., who had charge until the office building was sold and moved away. The library, once more homeless, was moved across the street into the stone store which stood, before the great fire, on the site of the present parsonage. Finally, in 1855, the town gave it a resting place for the next thirty-five years in the new record building, it being agreed in consideration therefor, "that any responsible person belonging to the town may have the right of drawing books from the library upon paying a reasonable compensation."

Mr. Chauncey D. Cowles, the town clerk, was

librarian for the year 1855. In February of the following year, Mr., now Dr., James R. Cumming, then the very successful principal of the Middle District school, was appointed librarian. With his habitual energy and exactness he brought order out of confusion, and the library became once more a very useful and prosperous institution. During the next ten years nearly all the most valuable books of the library were acquired, thanks to the fine literary taste, the generous gifts, and the practical good sense of Deacon Edward L. Hart.

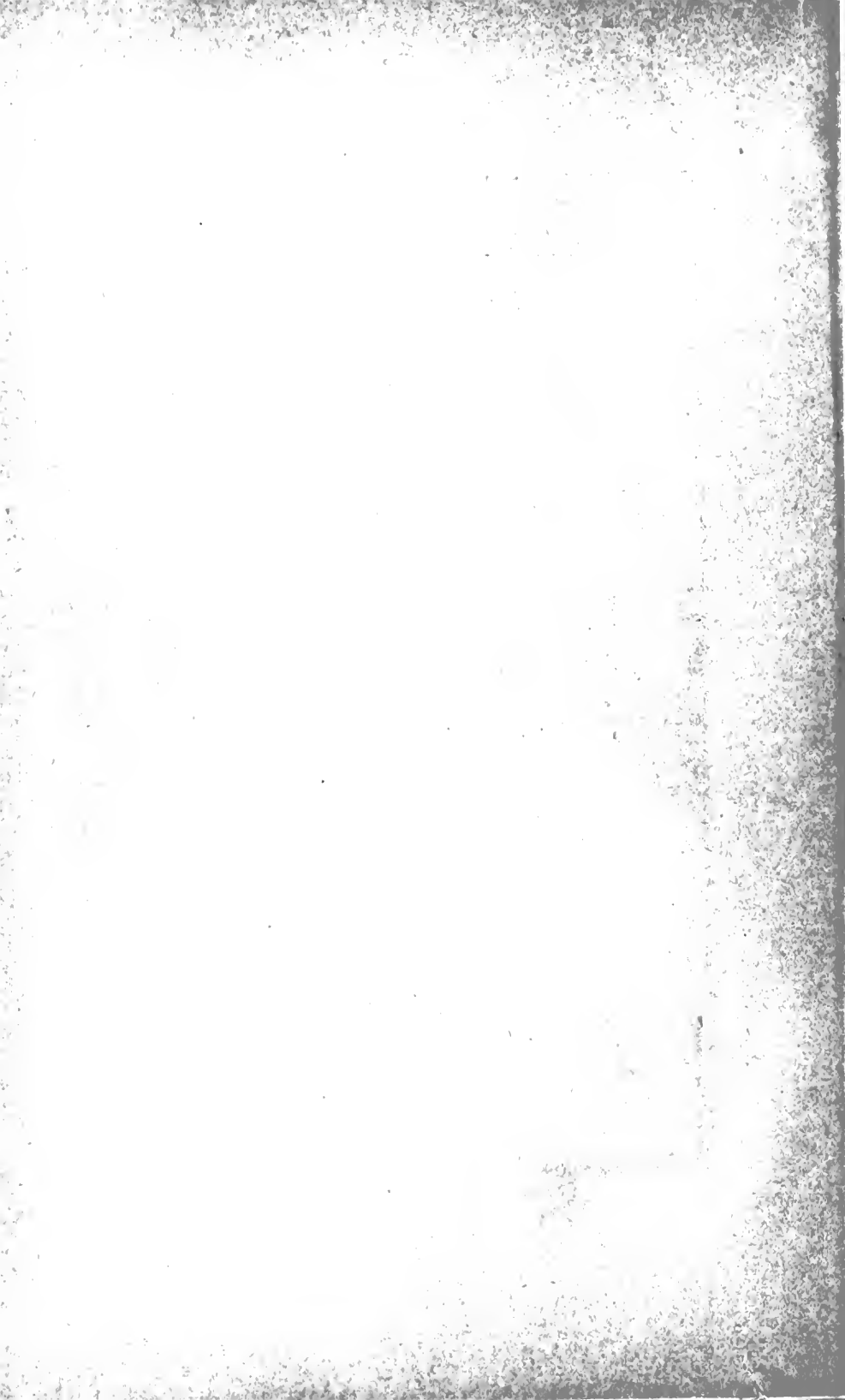
Such, then, was the library, which for a century has been no mean adjunct to the pulpit and the school-house, in giving to the citizens of this village whatever claims to intelligence and uprightness may justly belong to them. And now, after its wanderings from one temporary resting place to another, it has found an honorable and fitting place of abode. May it with many additions and with a generous care continue for another century to bless this village.

## LIBRARIANS.

ELIJAH PORTER,	-	-	-	elected	1795
LUTHER SEYMOUR,	-	-	-	"	Dec. 28, 1812
ELIJAH PORTER,	-	-	-	"	Feb. 12, 1814
SELAH PORTER,	-	-	-	"	April 2, 1826
SIMEON HART,	-	-	-	"	April 4, 1835
RUFUS COWLES,	-	-	-	"	1836
WILLIAM S. PORTER,	-	-	-	"	Feb. 18, 1839
ABNER BIDWELL,	-	-	-	"	Jan. 5, 1840
SIMEON HART,	-	-	-	"	Feb. 7, 1853
AUSTIN HART,	-	-	-	"	Sept. 26, 1853
CHAUNCEY D. COWLES,	-	-	-	"	1855
JAMES R. CUMMING,	-	-	-	"	Feb., 1856
JULIUS GAY,	-	-	-	"	Jan. 2, 1860
WILLIAM E. HART,	-	-	-	"	Jan. 6, 1868
THOMAS TREADWELL,	-	-	-	"	Jan. 4, 1869
THOMAS L. PORTER,	-	-	-	"	Jan. 2, 1882







*This Book belongs  
To the*  
*Monthly Library*  
IN FARMINGTON



*The Youth, who, Led by Wisdom's guiding Stars,  
Seeks VIRTUE'S Temple, and her Law Peruses:  
He, he alone, in Honour's Dome shall Stand,  
Crown'd, with Rewards, & rais'd above his Peers.*



N<sup>o</sup>.  
THIS BOOK BELONGS  
TO THE

Library

In the first Society in  
FARMINGTON  
— (LAW) —

Two pence P<sup>r</sup> Day for retaining a Book  
more than one Month.

One Penny for folding down a Leaf.

Three shillings for lending a Book to a  
Nonproprietor. No Member to retain a  
Book after 8 o'clock on drawing Evenings.

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*The Youth who led by wisdom's guiding  
Sects Virtue's Temple & her Law reveres  
He, he alone in Honors Dome shall stand  
Crown'd with Rewards & rais'd above his  
Peers*



Church Music in Farmington in the Olden Time

AN  
Historical Address  
DELIVERED AT THE  
ANNUAL MEETING  
OF THE  
VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY  
OF  
FARMINGTON, CONN.

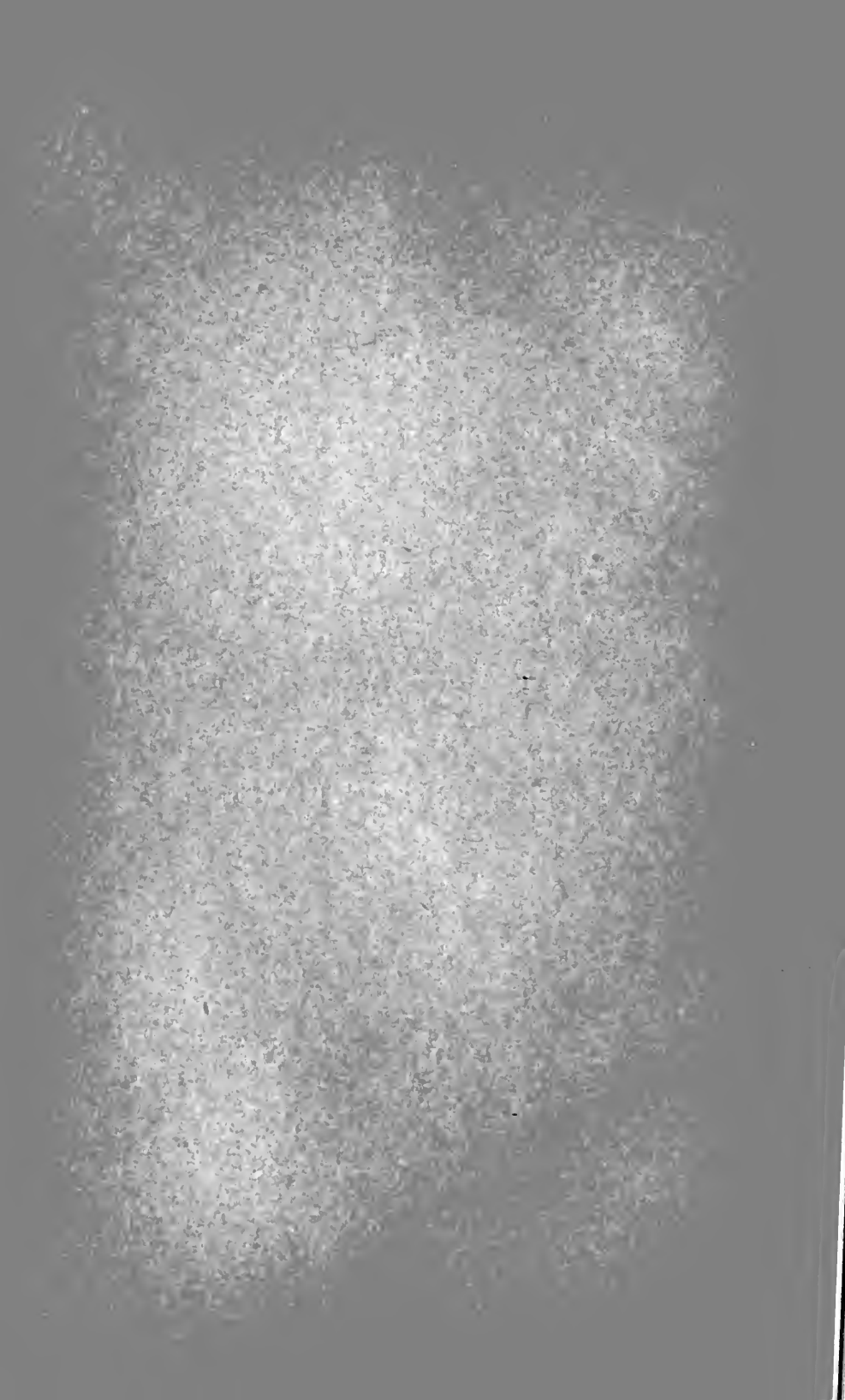
*May 6, 1891*

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BY JULIUS GAY

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HARTFORD, CONN.  
PRESS OF THE CASE, LOCKWOOD & BRAINARD COMPANY  
1891





Church Music in Farmington in the Olden Time

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## ADDRESS.

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*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of Farmington:—*

We have been called together this evening, in accordance with the articles under which we are associated, to hear of the prosperity of our library, and to select those who for another year shall care for its well-being.

In bygone times, whenever the citizens of this state were called upon to exercise the elective franchise, it was customary to designate some learned divine to deliver for their guidance and encouragement an annual election sermon. Far be it from me to invade the sacred office or to assail your ears with lessons of such ponderous wisdom. Some, however, who heard the account of the library of a century ago have desired to go back with me another century and hear something of that still older time. A rude age it was, but rudeness seen through the mists of two centuries ceases to be repulsive. The petty discomforts of life are forgotten, and even the uncouth becomes picturesque. There is a strange fascination in looking back on the deeds of your own ancestors; and the very localities where they lived—trivial to all others—seem sacred in the sight of their descendants.

You will hear of no libraries in their rude cabins. They deemed the Bible and the Psalm-Book sufficient for their wants. The one was for a time their only law book, and with the other their souls rose on the wings of song out of their gloomy surroundings to the God who had brought them hither, and who they believed would still sustain them.

What, then, was the music which was as dear to them as the breath of life?

Rude it may seem to our ears; trivial it could not have been. The gay soldier of King Charles's court derided it. Tennyson tells how —

“The Roundhead rode,  
And hummed a surly hymn.”

but when on Marston Moor the Ironsides of Cromwell raised their battle psalm and, roused to frenzy, rushed upon the Cavaliers, they learned full well the power of Puritan psalmody.

No doubt many of you say, “Have we not heard this old music over and over again, and, dressed in the very apparel of our ancestors, ourselves helped to sing it? By no means. The music of the Old Folks' Concert is all comparatively modern. This town had been settled more than a century when William Billings was born in Boston, in 1746, and in due time gave to the world those strange tunes which suited the taste of a former generation, and have not yet wholly lost their charm: Majesty, in which the vision of Ezekiel is portrayed, David's Lamentation, The Anthem for Easter, and numerous other pieces, well known to you all. Still later was

it when Timothy Swan, born in Worcester in 1758, and living now in Northfield and now in Stamford, inheriting a tinge of insanity from his mother, wrote that wild, weird tune, *Ocean*, in which he strives to picture how, while —

“The winds arise,  
And swell the towering waves,  
The men astonished mount the skies  
And sink in gaping graves.”

Daniel Read who sang —

“O may my heart in tune be found,  
Like David’s harp of solemn sound.”

or again, in the plaintive minor strains of *Russia*, compares man, whether of high degree or of the baser sort, to a “puff of empty air,” or in triumphant notes rejoices —

“While shepherds watch their flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground;”

or shrinks with horror at the dreadful end of the wicked as he sees them stand on slippery rocks while “fiery billows roll below,” died in New Haven so lately as 1841.

What, then, was the music of our forefathers in their first sanctuary?

It was simply the music they had been accustomed to sing in the churches of Old England. The settlers of this town came from Hartford, and were, for the most part, members of the so-called Braintree Company, which came from the County of Essex in England. They did not, therefore, like the Plymouth Colony, spend twelve years on their way in Holland until, as Winslow said, they were like to

lose their language and the name of English, but brought straight from the village churches of England the songs they had learned in their youth. Cotton Mather tells of their neighbors of the Salem church, that the Rev. Mr. Higginson, calling up his children and other passengers into the stern of the ship, to take their last sight of England, said, "We will not say, as the Separatists were wont to say at their leaving of England, 'Farewell, Babylon! Farewell, Rome!' but we will say, 'Farewell, dear England! Farewell, the Church of God in England, and all the Christian friends there. We do not go to New England as Separatists from the Church of England, though we cannot but separate from the corruptions in it.'"

They brought with them two metrical versions of the Psalms; that of Henry Ainsworth which was used mostly in Massachusetts, and that of Sternehold and Hopkins which found favor in this State. I have myself a copy brought over by one of the first settlers of this town. Its quaint old title is worth repeating.

"The Booke of Psalmes: Collected into English Meeter, by Thomas Sternehold, John Hopkins, and others: conferred with the Hebrew; with apt Notes to sing them withall. Set forth and allowed to be sung in all Churches, of the people together, before and after Morning and Evening Prayer: As also before and after Sermon: and moreover in private houses, for their godly solace and comfort, laying apart all ungodly Songs and Ballads, which tend

only to the nourishment of vice, and corrupting of youth."

It has, besides the metrical version of the Psalms, several pieces of Old English Church Music, a few of which I name because they form part of a book actually in use in this town nearly, if not quite, 250 years ago. The following certainly do not sound much like the music of the conventicle as the author of *Waverley* loved to describe it. The Benedictus or Song of Zacharias, The Magnificat or Song of the Blessed Mary, the Nunc Dimittis, or Song of Simeon, The Athanasian Creed, The Pater Noster or Lord's Prayer, The Ten Commandments, and many other set pieces. The music, of which there was a considerable variety, was printed with the old-fashioned square-headed notes and without bars except at the end of each line of the words, the C clef being invariably used, a sore puzzle to modern performers. Only the melody was given which was to be sung by the whole congregation in unison. Some few of the more rigid Puritans objected to congregational singing, and argued that, as one man prayed and preached, so only one should sing; a refinement of solo music which did not prevail. That these men looked upon singing simply as an act of devotion, without the slightest thought of anything æsthetic in it, appears when they proposed to exclude female voices, and argued further: "Because it is not permitted to a woman to speak in church, how then shall they sing? Much less is it permitted them to prophesy in the church. And singing of Psalms is

a kind of prophesying." These objections, though not sustained by the great body of the worshipers, were nevertheless answered at length by the Rev. John Cotton, in a tract published to help the introduction of the famous Bay Psalm Book, which was compiled by about thirty New England divines, and was printed at Cambridge in 1640, the year in which this town was settled. It was the first book printed in the United States, and has become so rare that a copy was sold in 1879 for \$1,200. It lacked the musical notes in the early editions, a most disastrous omission, as will soon appear.

A few years later, in 1718, Cotton Mather, best known by his famous *Magnalia*, published the *Psalterium Americanum*, which also lacked the printed notes. It was a very exact translation of the Hebrew, written in smooth and elegant English blank verse, but people missed the rhymes and the rude vigor of the old version, and would have none of it. It possessed one remarkable provision, said to have been invented by Richard Baxter, by which a number of the Psalms could be sung to any of the meters then in use, Long, Short, or Common,—a device which would commend itself to any luckless leader of a prayer meeting, who has come to grief in attempting to sing a Long meter hymn to a Short meter tune.

The metrical version of the Psalms was usually bound up with the great family Bible, and was too heavy and costly a book for common use in the churches. It was the custom, therefore, in this scarcity of singing books, for one of the deacons to read



the Psalm a line at a time, and when the singers had finished that line, to read the next, and so on until the Psalm was concluded. There were no hymns in use and no favorite Psalms which the congregation, becoming familiar with, could in time sing without the book. They deemed it their solemn duty to sing all the Psalms in course, just as they read their Bibles through from Genesis to Revelation, and then began again; and it worried their consciences not a little that in the early editions, Sternehold and Hopkins had not rendered all of the one hundred and fifty Psalms into meter. Still, as several had more than one hundred lines, and one over seven hundred, "deaconing out the Psalm," in this lack of books, was an evident necessity.

Let us now spend a Sabbath in the first meeting-house which stood on our village green, and, so far as may be, learn how our fathers worshiped within its walls. As all days are alike open to our choice, we select the year 1676 for our visit. You need not listen for the signal of the bell; you will have to wait 44 years for that sound; but the drum will be beaten at the time of divine service, and also an hour before.

Let us join the train of worshipers as they approach the sanctuary from all parts of the little village. They are, for the most part, on foot; but some from the outlying farms are on horseback—the good wife on a pillion behind the good man, with the youngest child in her arms, while the rest of the family—the sturdy sons and daughters—follow on foot,

family intermingled with family, and much paired according to the law of a natural selection older than Darwin. The meeting-house stands where the second and third house were afterward built. Doors open to the east and south, and very likely to the west. Within stands the lofty pulpit, directly beneath and in front of which is the deacons' seat, where the two deacons of the church—Deacon Stephen Hart and Deacon Thomas Judd—are already sitting. Above, running part way around the house, is a gallery, where the youth of both sexes are divided off from the rest of the assembly,—a most ingenious device for setting their high animal spirits and inherent love of mischief at constant war with the solemn decorum demanded by the tithing-man. The rest of the people are seated according to the custom of Puritan churches soon afterward formulated on our records, with “respect to age, office, and estate, so far as it tendeth to make a man respectable, and to everything else which hath the same tendency.” Prominent we shall see the civil magistrate, in the person of his Honor, John Wadsworth, Commissioner of the General Court, and next in rank that majestic personage, the captain of the train-band, whose office every boy looks forward to as the goal of his youthful ambition. Behind them sit the lesser dignitaries, the Lieutenant, the Sergeant, the Ensign, the Corporal. I must humbly beg their pardon if I have not set them down in the proper order, for you might as well address one of them without his exact title as to salute the Queen of Great Britain

and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, by her family name, simply as Mrs. Guelph. It is well that you have entered among the first comers, for the house is filled to its utmost capacity. Every available nook and corner is made to yield a seat for some devout worshiper. Soon after this, to relieve somewhat the pressure, "the town gave unto Ebenezer Steele, Joseph Judd, Thomas Lee, Nathaniel Lewis, and Samuel Judd, a liberty to build them a seat over the short girt at the easterly end of the gallery, on the condition that they do not damnify the other seats in the meeting-house." This was but a temporary relief. There was no longer room for the youth in the gallery, and to let them sit with their parents in the Holy of Holies below was not to be thought of. It would interfere with the etiquette of precedence in the seating of the house, and no European court ever was more rigid in this than were the worshipers in the old Puritan meeting-house. Nevertheless something must be done to accommodate the patriarchal families of our ancestors. The problem of how Noah stowed away all the animals in the ark, proposed by Dr. Johnson to little Miss Thrale as a pretty question in arithmetic, was as nothing compared to it. At length a compromise was effected by which some of the older and more sedate of the young women were admitted below, and "the town by vote gave liberty to Lieutenant Judd's two daughters, and the Widow Judd's two daughters, and the two eldest daughters of John Steele to erect, or cause to be erected, a seat for their proper use at the south end

of the meeting-house at the left hand as they go in at the door, provided it be not prejudicial to the passage and doors."

And now the guard of eight men with muskets at shoulder march in at the door, and, stacking their arms within reach, take the seats assigned them on either side. Why this armed invasion of the house of God? Simply because the noble savage is on the war path. News has just reached the town that Hezekiah Willet, brother of the pastor's wife, has been slain by the savages over at Swansea. Only a few months since Jobanna Smith of this town was killed at Hatfield, and Roger Orvis wounded. Nor have people forgotten the murder in their midst a few years before of a woman and her maid, and the burning of several houses. True, the murderer had been duly executed at Hartford in a manner too brutal to relate, and, if tradition be correct, his head had been set up on a pole, — an object-lesson for the instruction of the untutored savage. Just now they are unmindful of the lesson, and any moment King Phillip and his warriors may fall upon the village. Now that the last roll of the drum has sounded, and all are in their places, with stately step and reverend demeanor the pastor, Samuel Hooker, walks up the aisle and ascends the lofty pulpit. He comes fresh from the honors of Harvard, where for his graduating thesis he has argued in the affirmative one of those subtle metaphysical questions so delightful to the early New England mind, "Whether an all-perfect being can be perfectly defined." More re-

cently a fellow of that college, he declined a call by the church in Springfield, and was here installed as the successor of his brother-in-law, the Rev. Roger Newton.

The service begins with a prayer continuing about a quarter of an hour. The pastor then reads and expounds a chapter and announces the forenoon psalm. One of the deacons, or some devout man of sufficient musical gift, arises and reads, in a sonorous voice, the first line of the psalm —

“The man is blest that hath not bent,”

and, sounding the first note as near D as his skill admits, launches out bravely in the old choral. One by one the assembly joint their voices until the line is finished, when the leader reads again the second line —

“To wicked reade his eare,”

and the whole congregation having now caught the melody, join in the tune, only resting their voices for a mightier shout, while the deacon reads the third line —

“Nor led his life as sinners do;”

and so alternately reading and making the forest echo with their song, they conclude with —

“And eke the way of wicked men  
Shall quite be overthrown;”

and sitting down, with their souls, if not their voices, attuned to the praise of God, await the discourse of the beloved Hooker as he turns the hour-glass and announces his text. I cannot describe his sermon.

Twice he preached the annual election sermon, and twice the General Court ordered it printed, but no copies are known to have ever existed. After a concluding prayer and a blessing the people retire for a little time to their homes to eat their frugal Sabbath meal and talk over the lessons of the day.

The afternoon service is like the morning, except, after the concluding prayer, all children born since the last Sabbath are presented for baptism, no matter what the weather, no one daring to incur, what seemed to them, the terrible responsibility of deferring this solemn rite. One of the deacons now rises and announces "Brethren of the Congregation, now there is time left for contribution, wherefore as God has prospered you, so freely offer." The magistrates first, and others in the order of their rank, now come forward and bring their offerings to the deacon at his seat. Then new members, if there are any, are admitted, a concluding psalm is sung, if time permits, and with a blessing the congregation is dismissed.

I have said that the first editions of the Bay Psalm Book were printed without the music. As a result the people sang by rote, forgot in time all but three or four of the tunes, and sang these in as many ways as there were singers. To remedy the evil the publishers of the Bay Psalm Book began about 1690 to add the notes of the only twelve tunes then in use, viz.: Litchfield, Canterbury, York, Windsor, Cambridge, the 100th Psalm Tune, and six others, the names of which have ceased to be familiar.

So little was known of musical notation that such directions to the leader as these were printed.

“First observe . . . the place of your first note, and how many notes above and below that, so as you may begin the tune of your first note, as the rest may be sung in the compass of your and the people’s voices, without Squeaking above or Grumbling below.”

For six of the twelve tunes “a cheerful high pitch” is recommended for the first note. For the One Hundredth Psalm Tune “a note indifferent high,” and a low note for the remainder; and these directions were as concise as would be understood.

By the year 1720 the singing in all the churches had become so desperately bad that ministers began to preach in earnest the need of reform. Cotton Mather published his “Accomplished Singer” in 1721 for the encouragement “of those who are learning to sing by Rule and seeking to preserve a Regular Singing in the Assemblies of the Faithful.” The Rev. Thomas Walter of Roxbury the same year published a singing-book in the introduction to which he says, “At present we are confined to eight or ten tunes, and in some congregations to little more than half that number,” and as for the ornamental notes introduced according to the individual taste of each singer, he says “much time is taken up in shaking out these *turns* and *quavers*; and besides, no two men in the congregation quaver ~~alike~~ or together, which sounds in the ear of a good judge like *five hundred* different tunes roared out at the same time.” In our own State the Rev. Nathaniel Chauncey of Durham

published a sermon in 1727 in defense of the new or regular way of singing by note, in which he answers four objections. The fourth and no doubt the principal objection of the old people was, "It looks very unlikely to be the right way, because that young people fall in with it; they are not wont to be so forward for anything that is good." His answer was introduced by a somewhat free rendering of Job 32: 9, namely, "As old men are not always wise, so young men are not always fools." The Rev. Timothy Woodbridge also preached a sermon at East Hartford the same year which was printed and largely circulated in aid of the Reform. Singing-schools began also to be established, and the war between the old way and the new way began in good earnest. It lasted until just before the breaking out of the Revolutionary War. Let us see how it fared with the old church in Farmington. A period of forty-eight years has passed since our last visit to the old meeting-house. The beloved Hooker sleeps beneath the sod of the old burying ground, though no stone marks the spot. There has been a long interruption of the pastoral relation. Ineffectual calls have been extended by the town to Mr. Joseph Parsons, to "the much esteemed Mr. Jabez Fitch," to "the much esteemed Eliphalet Adams," to "the worthy Mr. John Buckley," to "Mr. Daniel Hooker," to "Mr. Ephraim Woodbridge," and to "the worthy Mr. Nathaniel Eells." Finally a committee has been ordered to undertake the long and perilous journey through the wilderness to Nantasket near Boston in search of a



minister. The town treasury being unequal to supplying funds for so important an expedition, a loan, to be repaid at the rate of two shillings for one, has been negotiated. The Rev. Samuel Whitman returns with the committee, and the town votes him thanks for "venturing the difficulties of such a journey to serve us." A new meeting-house has been erected during his pastorate, and now, on the 7th of April, 1724, the church votes "to delay the admission of regular singing into the church." Two months later, June 9th, they vote to "take a year's time to consider and look into the way of singing called regular," and "that if any person or persons shall for the future presume to sing contrary to the lead of the chorister appointed by the church to the disturbance of the assembly and the jarring of the melody, he or they shall be looked upon and dealt with as offenders." Nevertheless, this very thing happened, and the testimony before the court which followed will throw more light upon the musical ways of the past than any words of mine. The parties concerned have been a century in their graves and cannot be harmed.

"February 19, 1724-5. The testimony of Jonathan Smith is as followeth, viz.: I being at the house of God or place of public worship in Farmington the 24th day of January, 1724-5, it being the Sabbath or Lord's Day, and after prayer our chorister, viz.: Deacon John Hart did fit or set a tune to the psalm that was offered to be sung, which tune is commonly called Bella tune, as well he might, it being as proper or more proper to that psalm than any other tune. And soon after said Chorister had set said tune, I heard an unwonted sound, something like hollow-

ing or strong, strong singing to my disturbance and the jarring of the melody, which caused me to observe from whence it came, and perceiving that it came from Capt. Joseph Hawley, I took particular notice of his ascents and descents, and according to my best judgment and observation, said Hawley (after his manner of singing) sang the tune commonly called Southwell, *alias* Cambridge Short Tune, and said Hawley continued said disturbance the greatest part of said singing."

John Hooker, Esq., promptly fined Capt. Hawley for a breach of the Sabbath, but as the captain was a member of the General Assembly, he brought the following petition to that body, which states with much humor and with learned puns his view of the case. Though printed many times it is worthy of repetition.

"To the Honorable, the General Assembly at Hartford, the 18th of May 1725: The memorial of Joseph Hawley one of the House of Representatives humbly sheweth: Your memorialist, his father and grandfather and the whole church and people of Farmington have used to worship God by singing psalms to his praise in that mode called the Old Way. However, the other day Jonathan Smith and one Stanley got a book and pretended to sing more regularly and so made great disturbance in the worship of God; for the people could not follow that mode of singing. At length it was moved to the church whether to admit the new way or no, who agreed to suspend it at least a year. Yet Deacon Hart the chorister one Sabbath day, in setting the Psalm, attempted to sing Bella tune, and your memorialist being used to the old way as aforesaid did not know *bellum* tune from *pax* tune, and supposed the Deacon had aimed at Cambridge short tune and set it wrong, whereupon your petitioner raised his voice in the said short tune and the people followed him, except the said Smith and Stanly and the few who sang aloud in Bella tune, and so there was an unhappy discord in the singing as there has often been since the new singers set up, and the blame was all imputed to your poor petitioner, and John Hooker, Esq.,

Assistant, sent for him and fined him the 19th of February last for breach of the Sabbath, and so your poor petitioner is laid under a heavy scandal and reproach and rendered vile and profane for what he did in the fear of God and in the mode he had been well educated in and was then the settled manner of singing by the agreement of the church."

The memorial continues at great length but if all the memorials written by Capt. Hawley during the contention and still preserved were printed, they would make quite a good-sized book.

A single extract from the records of a Justice Court in Wethersfield shows how the youth of this town looked upon these proceedings.

"Asahel Strong of Farmington being presented . . . for that he did in company with several others in the night after the 13th day of November last past, it being the night next following the Sabbath or Lord's Day, at the place of parade or muster-ing in said Farmington, where Capt. Hawley usually trains his company, make and set up something called a gallows with a strange picture or image fixed thereon with 'lybels' upon it &c., thereby notoriously defaming, reviling and traducing Capt. Hawley of Farmington, though in a clandestine manner under the name of vetge [effigy?] or some such word, which actions or doings of his are contrary to the public peace of Our Sovereign Lord the King, his Crown and Dignity."

Two years later the Ecclesiastical Society on the 17th of March, 1726-7, expressed their great dislike of the "way of singing of Psalms which is recommended by the Reverend Ministers of Boston with other ministers to the number of twenty or thereabouts."

But the matter did not rest there. Some of the parties were disciplined by the church. A council of the neighboring divines was convened on the 18th

of January, 1730-1, and memorials lengthy and spirited were presented. Finally the church, August 4, 1737, more than twelve years after the beginning of the trouble, decided the learned decision of the council too difficult for their understanding, and that they would drop the whole matter.

After the conclusion of this unhappy strife, the church had rest many years. The elders had triumphed, but the younger singers awaited their time. On the 17th of December, 1750, the Ecclesiastical Society voted "that they would introduce Mr. Watts' Version of the Psalms to be sung on Sabbath days and other solemn meetings in the room of the version that hath been used in time past." This was a long step forward. True, some of the hymns describe the future state of the wicked in a manner too realistic to suit our modern taste, and Dr. Watts himself in his last years desired to recall some of his verses, but having parted with the copyright was unable to prevent the publication of what was no longer in accord with the more tender and loving feelings of his old age. Still very many of his hymns will be sung in our churches so long as devout worshipers shall admire whatever is majestic or reverential.

Twenty-three years more past. The reform advocated by the twenty divines half a century before has been preached in season and out of season from all the Congregational pulpits of New England. Tracts and sermons have been printed and scattered broadcast; singing schools have become the most

popular amusement of the young, and finally the old men who stood up manfully for the old way have one by one ceased their earthly songs. The change was finally made without opposition, when, on the 12th of April, 1773, the Ecclesiastical Society "Voted that the people who have learned the rule of singing have liberty to sit near together in the same position as they sat this day at their singing meeting, and that they have liberty to assist in carrying on that part of divine worship."

Of course a radical change of method did not at once go smoothly, and the next year a committee had to be appointed "to compromise the difference among the singers;" but differences among singers have been known since that time. The change was made by other towns of the state about the same time. In one of the churches of Windsor, in 1771; in Farmington and Simsbury in 1773: in Norfolk and Columbia in 1774: and in Harwinton in 1776. The change was not always made so easily as with us. In some churches the deacons persisted in lining out the psalm; but the new singers having once got well under way with the first line, kept straight on with the rest of the psalm, carrying everything before them like a whirlwind and leaving the deacon in hopeless despair. But not always. We read of one deacon who sat down in grim silence, biding his time, and when the young people had finished their musical antics, arose, and with trumpet tones which rang through the house, announced "Now let the people of the Lord sing." And they did it, though for the last

time, in the good old way. The historian of Worcester, Mass., tells us that in 1779, after the town had voted to adopt the new way of singing, "after the hymn had been read by the minister, the aged and venerable Deacon Chamberlain, unwilling to desert the custom of his fathers, arose and read the first line according to his usual practice. The singers, prepared to carry the alteration into effect, proceeded without pausing at its conclusion. The white-haired officer of the church, with the full power of his voice, read on until the louder notes of the collected body overpowered him, and the deacon, deeply mortified . . . seized his hat and retired from the meeting-house in tears." Nearer to us, in 1773, the History of Simsbury tells of the employment of a teacher of music who, "after practicing some time appeared with his scholars in church on a Sunday, and the minister having announced the psalm, the choir, under their instructor's lead, started off with a tune much more lively than the congregation had been accustomed to hear. Upon which one of the Deacons, Brewster Higley, took his hat and left the house, exclaiming 'Popery, Popery!'"

And now that more elaborate music began to be sung, instruments were allowed to guide the voices. First the pitch pipe, and then that horror of the older Puritans, the great viol, followed by the little viol, the flute, the bassoon, the hautboy, the clarionette, and if there were any other instruments known among them, all were introduced to praise the Lord and triumph over their elders.

And now, breaking loose from all restraint, whether religious or esthetic, with their taste founded on the patriotic songs that helped to usher in the War of the Revolution, the young men sang with wild enthusiasm the noisy fugue tunes of the day. William Billings was the pioneer of this style of music. Born in Boston, blind of one eye, and otherwise deformed in person, taking snuff by the handful from his open pocket, he pursued the trade of a tanner, and as he tended the mill for grinding bark, wrote out his intricate fugues on the wall with chalk, and sung them with a voice of thunder such as has been seldom bestowed on man. His first book, "The New England Psalm Singer," was published in 1770, the title page being enlivened by a doggerel of his own composition,

"O, praise the Lord with one consent,  
And in this grand design,  
Let Britain and the Colonies  
Unanimously join."

Somewhat later he kept a music store, his sign projecting out over the sidewalk painted BILLINGS' MUSIC in big letters on both sides. He was much annoyed by the ungodly youth of Boston, who amused themselves by tying cats together by their hind legs and hanging them on his sign. Their unearthly screams in connection with the words BILLINGS' MUSIC, expressing the popular opinion of his performances. Samuel Adams, the "Father of the Revolution," while he relied on such men as John Hancock to influence the wealthier and more cultured

classes of Boston, made good use of Billings and his music in stirring up the masses against the British rule. To the tune *Chester*, Billings set the words, —

“ Let tyrants shake their iron rod,  
And slavery clank her galling chains; ”

The 137th Psalm “ By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion,” he paraphrased as “ By the rivers of Watertown we sat down and wept, when we remember thee, O Boston.” . . . “ If I forget thee, O Boston ” . . . .

“ Then let my tongue forget to move,  
And ever be confined.  
Let horrid jargon split the air,  
And rive my nerves asunder:  
Let hateful discord grate my ear,  
As terrible as thunder.”

A wish which his own music amply fulfilled.

Billings’ own description of his music is as follows:

“ It has more than twenty times the power of the old slow tunes; each part straining for mastery and victory, the audience entertained and delighted, their minds surpassingly agitated and extremely fluctuated, sometimes declaring for one part, and sometimes another. Now the solemn bass demands their attention, — next, the manly tenor; now, the lofty counter, — now, the volatile treble. Now here, — now there, — now here again. O, ecstatic! Rush on, ye sons of harmony! ”

Time will fail to describe more at length this noisy music, with the best specimens of which you are already familiar, or how by slow degrees a better style took its place.

Let us not, however, leave the subject without some slight attempt to understand the position of



the worthy men of old who clung so tenaciously to the barbarous methods of their day, during their long war with the so-called "regular singing" of their children. They sung in their rude way as their fathers and their fathers' fathers had before them. Their three or four tunes had become so sacred to them that we are told "the people put off their hats, as they would in prayer when they heard one sung, though not a word was uttered." Some believed the tunes inspired equally with the Psalms themselves, and that they had been taught by the very voice of Jehovah speaking face to face with man as with Moses on Sinai.

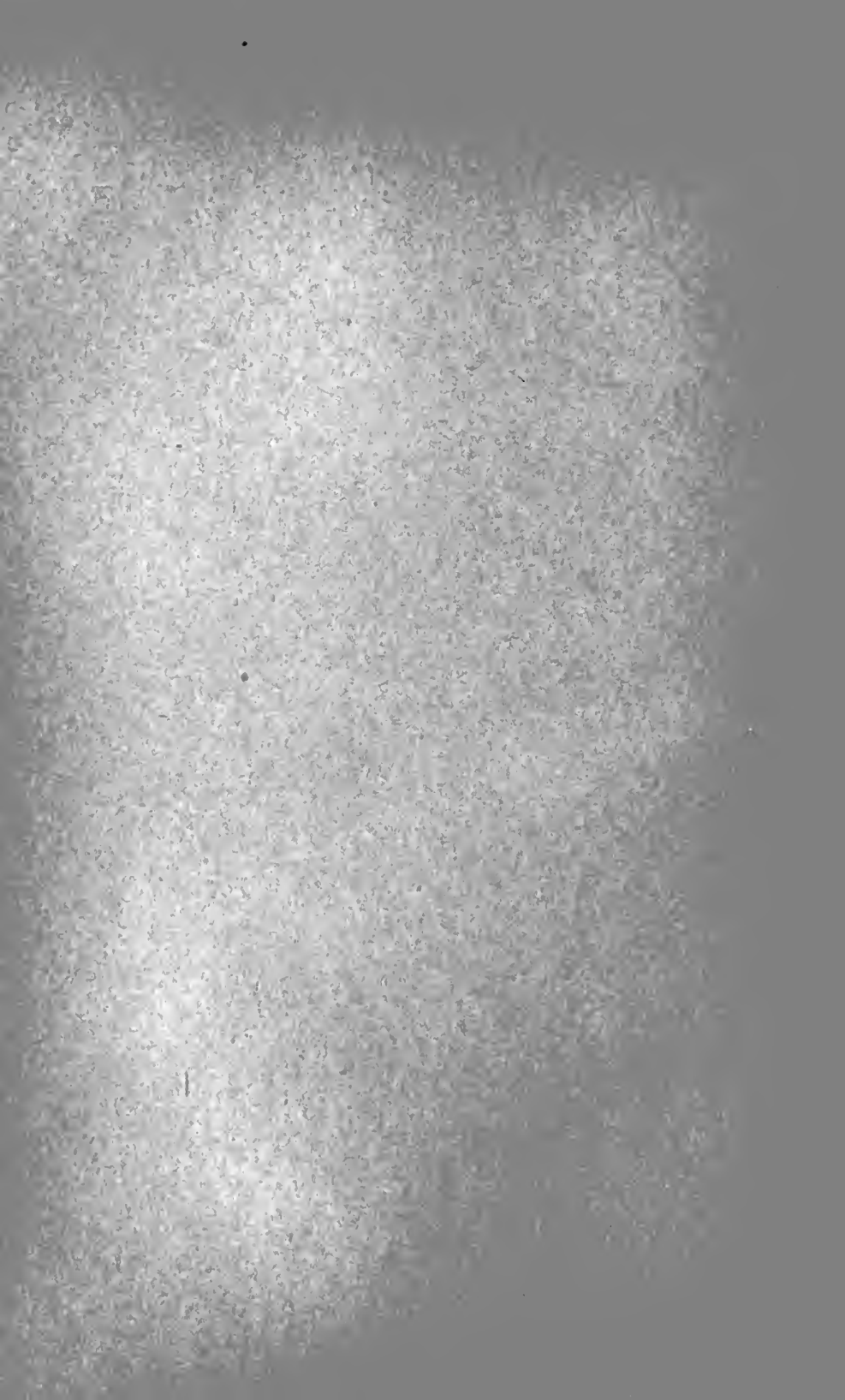
They held singing to be an act of devotion commanded by Him to whose ear their rude melodies and the more delicate tones of their children were alike as vanity except as they helped to bear upward the contrite soul of the worshiper. And now to sit in silence, debarred the right to worship as they believed the Word of the Lord commanded, while their children in no devotional mood performed their pretty tunes, was indeed hard to bear.

Like the patriarchal Cotter of Burns,

"They chant their artless notes in simple guise;  
 They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim;  
 Perhaps Dundee's wild warbling measures rise,  
 Or plaintive Martyrs, worthy of the name;  
 Or noble Elgin beats the heav'nward flame,  
 The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:  
 Compar'd with these, Italian thrills are tame;  
 The tickl'd ears no heart felt raptures raise;  
 Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise."

So sang our fathers in the sanctuary, generation after generation, until one by one they lay down to rest in the old burying-ground with an unfaltering trust that sometime, at the mighty blast of the archangel's trumpet, they should arise and stand in their flesh before God, singing with a now united voice, the glorious song of the redeemed.





## SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLMASTERS IN FARMINGTON IN THE OLDEN TIME.\*

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### *Ladies and Gentlemen of the Connecticut Historical Society :*

I have the honor to read for your entertainment this evening, an account of the Schools and Schoolmasters of Farmington in the Olden Time, trusting that it may not be wholly devoid of interest to those of other ancestry and other environments.

Our knowledge of the life of this community for the first forty years is most meager, and it may interest the members of this Society who have occasion to consult ancient records, to consider once for all why this is so.

The first volume of our town meeting records has disappeared. Tradition says the early records were all burned. The Rev. William S. Porter, a very learned local antiquary, accepts the tradition, while the historian of the descendants of Stephen Hart draws a lurid picture of Indians dancing at midnight around a burning house, and watching with fiendish glee the cremation of a whole family. The town records, he says, were burned with the house. Let us examine a moment the foundations of this oft repeated story.

The house of Sergeant John Hart, son of Deacon Stephen, the immigrant, stood on the west side of the main street, nearly opposite the meeting-house, and was burned on the night of Saturday, December 15, 1666. The Rev. Samuel Danforth, pastor of the First Church in Roxbury, kept a diary, and under date of February 11, 1666 (O. S.), entered "Tidings came to vs from Connecticut, how that on ye 15th of 10 m 66, Sergeant Heart ye son of Deacon Heart and his wife & six children, were all burnt in their House at Farmington, no man knowing how the fire was kindled, neither did any of ye neighbors see ye fire till it was past remedy. The church there had kept a Fast at this mans house 2 dayes

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\* A paper read before the Connecticut Historical Society, Jan. 5, 1892, by Julius Gay.

before. One of his sons being at a farm, escaped this burning." The Rev. Simon Bradstreet of New London also kept a journal, and under date of December, 1666, entered, "There was a house burnt at Farmington in Connecticut jurisdiction. The man, his wife (who was with child) and six children were burnt in it. The Lord is to bee feared because of his judgments. 129 Psal. 120."

John Winthrop, Governor of the Colony of Connecticut, writes to Col. Richard Nicolls, the Royal Governor at New York, under date of December 24, 1666, and the paper states that "a narrative of the sad accident of ye fire at Serg. Sol. Harts at Farmington was also inclosed."

The Indians had, therefore, nothing to do with the fire. Mesapano, Cherry, and the rest of them, had indulged in that amusement once too much some nine years before, and the Colonial Records show ample reason why they were not likely to repeat their indiscretion. We shall soon see how such accidents happened without any help from savage malice. There is no reason to suppose that any records were ever burned. None seem to be missing but the most interesting volume of them all, the minutes of town meetings for the first forty years, and the history of that book is briefly this. At a meeting held December 27, 1682, the town voted that "the Ould Touen Book should bee kept by the Touensmen annually as they are chosen & thoes persons yt will have any act or grant yt is therein, transcribed into ye New book, it shall bee don att their own proper charg and cost." In 1709, a notch in the top of the leaf is reported and the exact size is given. In 1714 the clerk reports a still larger "gap torn out at ye top of ye leafe." Some thirty-three extracts were made from the old book, and from the dates, we learn that the old book was in existence eighteen years before the fire, and fifty-two years after the fire, and simply fell in pieces, and no one cared enough for it to rebind or save it. Thus much in explanation of our want of information about the earliest schools of the town.

The Puritan Fathers of New England founded the church and the school simultaneously. They were their two strong defenses in the eternal warfare in which they were engaged, a strife not simply with savage beasts and savage men, but with the powers of darkness who seemed to them to have made the gloomy forests of New England especially their home. They did not found the school so much from their love of learning, though there were ripe and rare scholars among them, but from the religious motives very clearly

set forth in their code of 1650. "It being," so runs the code, "one chiefe project of that old deluder Sathan to keepe men from the knowledge of the Scriptures, as in former times keeping them in an vnknowne tongue, so in these latter times by perswading them from the vse of Tongues, so that at least the true sense and meaning of the originall might bee clouded with false glosses of saint-seeming deceiuers; and, that Learning may not bee buried in the Grave of o<sup>r</sup> Forefathers, in Church and Commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeauors. It is therefore ordered by this Courte and Authority thereof, that euery Township within this Jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty householders, shall then forthwith appoint one within their Towne to teach all such children as shall resorte to him, to write and read."

For the first sixty years of its existence as a town, the inhabitants of Farmington met annually in town meeting to transact all public business, whether pertaining to the town, the church, or the school. About the year 1686, Richard Seymour and others began a settlement near the present north line of the town of Berlin on the road known as Christian Lane. The settlement prospered, and in 1705 the General Assembly made it into a distinct society called the Great Swamp Society, the remaining part of the town being from this time on known as the First Society of Farmington. For ninety years thereafter the inhabitants met in society meetings in divers places to vote upon matters relating to churches and schools, and in town meetings at the center for all other public matters. At the May session of the General Assembly of 1795 certain moneys were granted to towns and societies, and the societies which received them began to be called by the Assembly, School Societies. On the 29th of October of that year the First School Society of Farmington was organized, and thenceforth for sixty years the division of the public business was a triple one. The Ecclesiastical Society provided for the church, the School Society for schools and cemeteries, and the town for all other matters. In 1856 the legislature abolished school societies, and ever since the Ecclesiastical Society has been confined to the care of matters religious, and the town to matters secular.

By the code of 1650 reading and writing were to be taught in all public schools, and, whenever any town increased to the number of one hundred families, it was required to set up a Grammar school, that is, a school in which the Latin and Greek

languages were taught. That a somewhat high standard was aimed at in this town will appear from the qualifications required of the masters. The first master of whom we have any knowledge was a minister. In 1685 the town voted to procure "a man that is so accomplished as to teach children to read and write and teach the grammar and also to step into the pulpit to be helpful there in time of exigency."

In 1693 they desired "a man that is in a capacity to teach both Latin and English, and, in time of exigency, to be helpful to Mr. Hooker in the ministry." A similar vote was passed the next year. All this learned instruction was to be given in the winter schools which the older boys attended. The proper education in this town for females was settled by a judicial decision in 1656. The previous year Thomas Thomson of Farmington, the first of that numerous family, died and left in his will directions for the education of his children. The court in Hartford, "finding many terms or expressions therein dark and intricate," decided "that the sons shall have learning to write plainly and read distinctly in the Bible, and the daughters to read and sew sufficiently for the making of their ordinary linen." The same court in 1655, on the death of Thomas Gridley of Hartford, ordered the administrator to "well educate ye children, learning ye sonnes to read and write and ye daughters to read and sew well."

Writing was an accomplishment not considered necessary for females. To the girls and smaller children, a female teacher gave instruction in the summer months. In 1747 the society "granted to ye Scoll dame yt kept scool of the Inhabitants att Sider brook ye same Sallery pr week as they gave ye dames in the Town plat."

The Dames' School was an institution with which the first settlers had been familiar in the land of their childhood. Shenstone, born in 1714, thus describes good Mistress Sarah Lloyd, his early teacher, in the poem of "The Schoolmistress:"

"In every village mark'd with little spire,  
Embowered in trees, and hardly known to fame,  
There dwells, in lowly shed and mean attire,  
A matron old, whom we schoolmistress name,  
Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame.

The noises intermixed, which thence resound,  
Do learning's little tenement betray;  
Where sits the dame, disguised in look profound,  
And eyes her fairy throng, and turns her wheel around."



I am not aware that the spinning wheel forms a part of the philosophical apparatus of the modern school, nor would the youthful schoolmistress of the present day find much in common with the dame of two centuries ago, either in appearance or manner or attire.

“Her cap, far whiter than the driven snow,  
 Emblem right meet, of decency does yield ;  
 Her apron, dyed in grain, as blue, I trowe,  
 As is the hare-bell that adorns the field ;  
 And in her hand, for scepter, she does wield  
 Tway birchen sprays, with anxious fears entwined,  
 With steadfast hate and sharp affliction joined,  
 And fury uncontrolled, and chastisement unkind.”

Possibly, good Mistress Lloyd might have had something on the other hand to say about the boy Shenstone. In more loving terms does Henry Kirke White paint the village matron of his youth, good Mistress Garrington.

“Gentle of heart, yet knowing well to rule.  
 Staid was the dame, and modest was the mien,  
 Her garb was coarse, yet whole and nicely clean ;  
 Her neatly border'd cap, as lily fair,  
 Beneath her chin was pinn'd with decent care ;  
 And pendant ruffles of the whitest lawn,  
 Of ancient make her elbows did adorn.  
 Faint with age, and dim were grown her eyes ;  
 A pair of spectacles their want supplies.”

Let us not regret that “Old times are changed, old manners gone.” But what shall we say of the discipline of the winter school with its big boys and strong-armed master? The Puritan took the Bible, Old Testament as well as New, for his infallible guide, and when he read “He that spareth his rod hateth his son,” he did not presume to be wiser than Solomon. It was the Englishman's belief that the learned languages could only be taught by a constant application of the rod. Bennet Langton is said to have once complimented Dr. Johnson on his skill in Latin. “Sir,” said the great moralist, “My master whipt me very well. Without that I should have done nothing.” It was a common notion of the older boys in New England schools, down to quite a recent time, that a master who had not the physical ability to give them a sound thrashing could teach them nothing. Many years ago a gentleman, then prominent in the public affairs of the town, told me the custom in the district school of his boy-

hood. Winter after winter the boys had turned the master out of doors, until the school had become a total failure. The committee were at their wits' end. Finally, they heard of a young man in a distant town who thought he could teach the school. The committee thought otherwise, but, as no one else would undertake it, they engaged him. The very first day showed the boys that a new manner of man had come among them, and they went home battered and bruised and howling to their parents for vengeance. Their fathers were terribly enraged, and vowed that the very next morning they would show that master that he could not treat their boys in that sort of way. When the school bell jingled the next morning, every boy was in his place and everything went on in perfect order. An unusual stillness pervaded the room, but it was a deathlike stillness that boded no good to the master. A fire of oak logs was blazing in the fireplace, and the master now and then stirred it up with the big iron shovel, which somehow he neglected to remove from the logs, and left it there with its long iron handle sticking out within easy reach of his desk. It was none to soon, for in a few minutes half a dozen burly men tramped into the room without any useless ceremony of knocking, and having briefly stated their business, made a rush for the schoolmaster. Drawing the huge iron shovel, blazing red-hot from the fire, he brought it down on their luckless pates with all the power of his strong arm. If the cherubim, who guarded the gate of Eden, with their flaming swords turning every way, had appeared among them, they could not have been more overwhelmed with astonishment. The action was short and decisive. In a few moments all that remained of the intruders was a very bad smell of burnt woolen and singed hair. The school that winter was a great success. Never had the boys made such progress in the "three Rs," but when the committee endeavored to secure the master's services for the next winter, he declined. He had proved his ability to teach school, and wandered away to fresh fields of usefulness.

The first schoolhouse in Farmington of which we have any mention was ordered in 1688, when the town voted "that they would have a town house to keep school in, built this year, of eighteen-foot square, besides the chimney space, with a suitable height for that service, which house is to be built by the town's charge." The clause relating to the chimney is significant.

Chimneys were at first built on the outside of the houses. They were not built of bricks, for there were no bricks in the country except those brought by the Dutchmen from Holland. They were not built of stone, because they had no lime for mortar but the little they could obtain from the burning of oyster shells. So they built their chimneys of wood, laid up log-house fashion, and lined with clay. Of course the clay was continually coming off, and the houses taking fire. The town, therefore, every year elected, along with its other officers, a set of men called chimney viewers, whose business it was to inspect these chimneys once in six weeks in winter, and once a quarter in summer, and who were to be fined ten shillings for any neglect of duty. This old plan of paying no salaries, but of imposing fines for every neglect of duty, did not tend to make offices the spoils of political victory. The vote to build this year was not carried out. Two years after they added to their committee for this purpose. The fourth and fifth years find them voting about finishing the house. We do not know where it stood, but probably near the church on the land reserved for public uses. This house, which was five years in building, continued in use but twenty-five years, when the town voted that they would not build a new schoolhouse but repair the old one, and then, before the meeting adjourned, voted not to repair. The next year, in 1717, the Ecclesiastical Society took the matter in hand and voted "to erect a new schoolhouse with all convenient speed," and this time, that there should forever be no doubt as to its site, they voted that it should be "on ye meeting house green and near where the old chestnut tree stood." This house was in use until May, 1756, when the society voted to sell the schoolhouse in the meeting-house yard to the highest bidder. Five months before they had voted to build two houses sixteen feet square, or as much larger as the committee should judge needful, one at the North end of the town and one at the South end. From this time on schoolhouses rapidly multiplied. A division of the town into twelve school districts was adopted June 16, 1773, and the inhabitants were empowered "to erect schoolhouses in their respective districts where and when they please." Gov. Treadwell reports about the year 1809 that "each of these districts is accommodated with a schoolhouse convenient and in good repair, excepting the Middle and North schoolhouses, which are too small for the number of scholars. What the interior arrange-

ment of the Middle District schoolhouse was which seemed a model of convenience to the Governor, has been described to me by one who remembers it as long ago as 1820. The arrangement was the one that I remember at a much later period in the Waterville district. Around the wall on all sides ran a wide board nailed up at a convenient angle. In front, for a seat, was a rough slab, sawed side upward, supported on legs driven into augur holes and often projecting above them to the no small discomfort of the occupants. The whole arrangement was exceedingly simple. Was a class called on to recite,—there was no complex marching out to music, but each child, swinging his feet over the seat, dropped them down on the other side, and the class at once sat facing the teacher ready for recitation. Recitation over, they swung their feet back again and studies went on as before.

In regard to the support of the public schools of the town, it would be interesting to trace the gradual change in the law from year to year, but time will not suffice. Those who desire this knowledge will find it most fully set down in the report of the Hon. Henry Barnard to the legislature of 1853. In the year 1685 it was voted to establish “a free school in this town” with the limitation only, that if the appropriation proved insufficient the balance should be made up by the inhabitants whose tax-list amounted to one hundred pounds. To all others the school was to be absolutely free. The plan was, however, soon given up, and the former plan was renewed, of voting about ten pounds a year, and leaving the parents of the scholars to make up the rest. Each family was also to provide a load of wood in the winter. This plan, with little variation (the provision about wood only excepted), continued until the State, in 1868, made all the public schools free. I well remember, while committee of the North District, making out year after year the rate-bills under which the parents, usually the poorer ones, paid a large part of the school expenses. This may have done some little good in making them value what cost them heavily, but on the whole, the plan was oppressive and unwise. As time went on and our ancestors, by patient toil and frugal habits, earned for themselves a more generous life, their first thought was to build up certain funds which would, they fondly thought, give their descendants a free school for all time. These funds were five in number. In the years 1737 and 1738 the land forming the town-

ships Canaan, Cornwall, Goshen, Kent, Norfolk, Salisbury, and Sharon were sold by the Colony of Connecticut and the money distributed among the towns of the colony in proportion to their tax-lists of the year 1733, the interest to be used for the support of their respective schools forever. Treasurers of this school fund were appointed in Farmington as early as 1741. To this fund in 1766 was added any sums still due the colony under the excise Act of 1758 on tea and other merchandise which the towns could collect.

The next fund for schools was acquired on this wise. More than one hundred years before, in 1672, the town voted that a rectangular piece of land extending three miles north of Round Hill, two miles east of the meeting-house, three miles south of the house of Joseph Hecock and two miles west of Round Hill, should be reserved. All other land of the town should be divided among the eighty-four tax-payers of that year, in proportion, or nearly so, to the amount of their tax-list. This land was divided at different times between 1721 and 1764 into thirteen grand divisions, and these, for the most part, into tiers of lots one-fourth of a mile wide, separated by four-rod highways with much wider ones occasionally thrown in. These highways were for the most part located where no roads were needed or over precipices or through swamps where none could be made. The attempt to use one of them in the Pine Woods resulted in its being known ever since as Folly Road. So, on the 27th of December, 1874, the town voted to sell such highways, the avails to be a perpetual fund for the support of schools. To avoid any possible illegality, the General Assembly passed an Act on the 18th day of May, 1786, validating such sales. The last sale was made October 19, 1819, since which time the courts have held any further such sales illegal. Next came the famous School Fund of Connecticut. The colony claimed under the charter of 1662 a strip of territory of the width of the present State, beginning at the west boundary of Pennsylvania, and extending due west to the South Sea, or later on to the Mississippi River. This the State ceded, in 1786, to the United States, reserving the small part long known as the Western Reserve, lying east of the west bounds of Erie and Huron counties in Ohio. From the sale of this Western Reserve arose the Connecticut School Fund. The next and last fund was derived from the surplus revenue in the treasury of the United States, which, by an Act of Congress passed June 23, 1836, was

distributed among the several States in proportion to their representation in that body, and known as the Town Deposit Fund. Gov. Treadwell made an elaborate estimate of the probable income from the funds existing in 1799, and rejoiced in the belief that it would pay the school expenses of Farmington, and leave annually the sum of \$447.84 "to be applied to the support of the gospel ministry." On the 4th of March, 1799, therefore, the School Society appointed "Hon. Lt. Governor Treadwell, Timothy Pitkin, Jr., and John Mix Esquires" to petition the General Assembly, in May of that year, for liberty to use the surplus income of the funds for the support of the ministry. The General Assembly granted this request, but when, on the 5th of December, 1803, the Ecclesiastical Society applied for the money, its request was flatly refused. The next year there was a compromise in which the Ecclesiastical Society was allowed the money for "the instruction and practice of psalmody in said society; provided nevertheless that all dissenters from the mode of worship practiced in said society shall be entitled to their rateable proportion of said monies." In 1805 and 1806 the "Gospel Ministry" secured the money, and also in 1808 when the surplus had fallen to "about 137 dollars." After this no farther attempt seems to have been made to divert the money from strictly educational uses. The schools were becoming more numerous and expensive. The parish of Northington claimed its share, and perhaps the distant muttering began to be heard of the storm which was soon to separate church and state forever.

The amount of the Town School Fund in 1826 was \$9,090.41, and in 1881 it was \$9,470.58, at which latter date the Town Deposit Fund amounted to \$4,882.41.

But enough of funds and finances. Let us go back two centuries to the old log schoolhouse and consider what our forefathers studied in that little cabin. The same meeting that ordered it built voted twenty pounds for the instruction of the "male children that are through their horning-book."

The horning-book, more commonly called the horn-book, consisted of a board about as big as one's hand on which was fastened a paper inscribed with the alphabet and usually below it the Lord's Prayer. Over all was nailed a thin sheet of translucent horn through which the boy could see the characters beneath and with his dirty fingers point out great A, little a, and

so on, without soiling the clean white paper below. Shenstone says :

“Lo! now with state she utters her command ;  
Eftsoons the urchins to their tasks repair,  
Their books of stature small they take in hand,  
Which with pellucid horn secured are,  
To save from finger wet the letters fair :”

Cowper describes it as : —

“Neatly secured from being soiled or torn  
Beneath a pane of thin translucent horn,  
A book (to please us at a tender age  
’Tis called a book, though but a single page),  
Presents the prayer the Saviour deigned to teach,  
Which children use, and parsons, — when they preach.”

The next book in course was a very small one, but was more universally read and left a more lasting impression on the New England mind than any other book whatever, the Bible alone excepted. This was the New England Primer. Primers, formerly called prymer or primary books, are among the oldest writings in our language. The Vision of Piers Plowman, written about 1362, enumerates the prymer among priestly books. The Prioress, one of the Canterbury Pilgrims whom Chaucer sets forth from the old Tabard Inn about 1386, tells of a little child “as he sate in the scole at his primere.”

Henry VIII, in 1545, directs that “every schoolmaster and bringer-up of young beginners in learning, next after the A. B. C. now by us also set forth, do teach this primer or book of ordinary prayers.”

These little books, containing first the doctrines and forms of the older church, then the modified forms of the Established Church of Henry and of Elizabeth became by slow changes the chief exponent of New England Calvinism.

In December, 1645, at a court holden at New Haven, Goodwife Stolon was complained of for selling “primers at 9<sup>d</sup> apiece which cost but 4<sup>d</sup> here in New England.” Nothing is certainly known of the contents of these early primers. Dr. Trumbull tells of one compiled by the Apostle Eliot in 1669 for the use of the Indians supposed to be substantially the same, the contents of which he discovers by translating from Algonkin back into English. In an “Almanack Containing an Account of the Coelestial Motions, Aspects, &c. For the year of the Christian Empire, 1691.” It is advertised that “There is now in the Press, and

will suddenly be extant, a Second Impression of the New England Primer enlarged, to which is added, more Directions for Spelling; the Prayer of K. Edward the 6th, and Verses made by Mr. Rogers the Martyr, left as a Legacy to his Children. Sold by Benjamin Harris, at the London Coffee-House in Boston."

The earliest edition of which a complete copy is known to exist, is that of 1737. The first leaf is adorned with a wood-cut of the "Man of Sin," followed by one of King George the Second. Then come "The Great Capital Letters," "The Small Letters," the "Easie Syllables for Children," ab, eb, ib, etc., leading rapidly up to A-bom-i-na-ti-on and other words of six syllables. Then comes the Alphabet adorned with cuts, beginning with the Alpha of the Puritan's faith, —

" In Adam's Fall  
We sinned all."

with its representations of Adam, Eve, the Apple, and the Serpent coiled around the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The succeeding illustrations are worth a moment's consideration as showing the gradual change of Puritan thought. Their early maxims of prudence and morality, after the great revivals which followed the preaching of Edwards and Bellamy, for a while gave place to solemn precepts of religion, and these were in turn modified by the taste of later times. Against the letter C stood the rhyme : —

" The Cat doth play  
And after slay,"

with a picture of a cat standing on her hind-legs and playing on a pipe.

This was discarded for the solemn utterance —

" Christ crucify'd  
For sinners Dy'd."

Subsequently the cat was reinstated, this time playing the fiddle and still later playing with an unlucky mouse after the manner of cats. Against the letter D the old rhyme

" A dog will bite  
A thief at night,"

was dropped, and we read

"The Deluge drown'd  
The world around;"

but the picture of the thief with his bag of plunder and the dog



hard after him taught too valuable a lesson to be lost, and the  
 "Deluge" had at length to give place. The loyal utterance

"Our King the good  
 No man of blood;"

became

"Proud Korah's Troop  
 Was swallowed up,"

for which an edition of 1812 has

"'Tis Youths' Delight  
 To fly their Kite."

For the letter O the old version had

"The Royal Oak, it was the Tree  
 That sav'd His Royal Majesty;"

but the memory of Charles was not very dear to them and so  
 they substituted a tribute in honor of three Old Testament  
 worthies --

"Young Obadiah,  
 David, Josiah,  
 All were pious."

The Royal Oak was at length reinstated, and finally a Hartford  
 edition is said to have improved it into

"The Charter Oak it was the Tree  
 That saved to us our Liberty."

The solemn admonition

"Time cuts down all  
 Both great and small,"

could not hold its place against the couplet --

"Young Timothy  
 Learnt sin to fly."

with a picture of Sin which amply justifies Timothy's flight. But  
 Time proved too strong for Timothy and at length reappears at  
 the top of the page with his scythe and forelock. There was  
 much other matter in the New England Primer which we have no  
 time to consider, a very learned and entertaining account of  
 which by Dr. Trumbull may be found in the numbers of the  
*Sunday School Times* for 1882. All this matter was designed to  
 lead the youthful mind gradually up to the contemplation of the  
 grand end and aim of the book. The Westminster Assembly's  
 Shorter Catechism, beginning with "What is the chief end of man,"

and going on through the profoundest doctrines of Calvinism. Saturday was devoted to the study of this catechism, and the minister, at stated times, examined the children upon their knowledge of its contents. As if this were not enough, the code of 1650 enjoined upon "the Selectmen of every Town . . . to see . . . that all Masters of families do once a week at least catechise their children and servants in the grounds and principles of religion "

Not only was the catechism of the Westminster divines taught in the schools, but every church and town had some other favorite one adapted to their especial needs. That of the Rev. John Cotton, in very common use, was entitled "Spiritual Milk for BOSTON BABES in either England Drawn out of the Breasts of both Testaments for their Souls Nourishment." The Rev. Mr. Stone of Hartford wrote one for his church, and another, in the most illegible penmanship I am acquainted with, is inscribed on the first record-book of the church in Farmington. It contains such questions as, "Is original sin an exorbitation of a man's whole nature from the whole law, and actual sin the exorbitation of the action from the law?" The youthful mind having become familiar with the distinction between original sin and actual sin, was next asked "Was Adam's transgression carried on in his own person, or was it imputed to his seed?" By which time he must have been ready to exclaim in the words of the next question, "What is this . . . original sin?" However absurd these doctrines may seem to some or hateful to others, to the God-fearing men of old they were the most terrible of realities. The remaining list of school books is a short one. The Bible was, no doubt, read, but it was not an age of Bible Societies and cheap Bibles. The word of God in every household was a costly book handed down with reverence from father to son like that of the cotter of Burns. "The big ha'-Bible, ance his father's pride." Probably some cheaper edition of the New Testament supplied their needs. At a later day in 1815 the overseers of public schools in Farmington adopted the following rules concerning the use of the Bible and Catechism, interesting as showing the reverential and law-abiding spirit of a bygone time.

"The masters will select such lessons from the Bible for those who read therein, as they can best understand; and will frequently explain and inculcate such truths in the course of read-

ing, as lie nearest the level of their capacities, by occasional remarks or a more solemn address; particularly their obligations to honour and obey their parents; to be subject to magistrates and all in authority; to revere the ministers of the gospel; to respect the aged and all their superiors; to reverence the sabbath, the word and worship of God; also to remind them of their dependence on God, of their accountability to him, of their mortality, and of the importance of religion both as a preparation for death, and the only means of true peace, comfort, and usefulness in the world. On Saturdays the masters will teach the children the catechism before mentioned; and it is expected that all such as go through a course of ordinary school learning, will commit the whole to memory, so as to be able promptly to answer every question therein."

The Assembly's Catechism continued in use until 1846, when it was voted to use the "Catechisms of Religious Denominations among us."

The character of the teachers who were to give this religious instruction was carefully considered. By the rules of 1825, 1841, and 1846, each candidate must formally declare his belief in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures.

In 1825 Daboll's Arithmetic was formally introduced into the schools, having been in use for about ten years in the Farmington Academy. Probably it was the first text-book in Arithmetic ever used in our public schools.

In 1805, twenty years before, only "some useful arithmetical tables were ordered by the board of overseers." Previous to the Revolution, Arithmetic was no more taught in the common schools than Differential Calculus is now. It was one of the higher studies considered of no use outside of the counting-room. Slates and blackboards were unknown, and if the pedagogue could put a few columns of figures on paper for some youthful prodigy to foot, he was thought something uncommon, while to read his Bible in Latin and Greek was not an unusual accomplishment.

In 1796 the School Society ordered the introduction of "Webster's Institute in all its parts," and directed that the Bible should be read as the closing exercise of the afternoon. By Webster's Institute in all its parts, was meant: Part First, the famous Spelling Book; Part Second, "A plain and comprehensive Grammar founded on the true principles and idioms of the language,"

which, however, never came into general use; Part Third, "An American Selection of lessons in reading and speaking, calculated to improve the Minds and refine the Taste of Youth," etc., etc., more familiarly known simply as "The Third Part." Webster's Spelling Book held its place for seventy-eight years until it was voted out in 1874, and the school boy no longer reads of the Boy that stole Apples, or of the Milk-maid who prematurely counted her chickens, of Poor Tray, The Partial Judge, and all the other wholesome lessons in morality.

Webster's Third Part, coming after the war of Independence, was largely made up of the patriotic orations of Hancock, Warren, Ames, Livingston, and other American orators, with the Fourth of July oration of Joel Barlow at the North Church in Hartford. It would hardly be read with much enthusiasm by the boy of to-day, but at the beginning of the century every boy was taught to consider himself a possible President of the United States, and school declamations were thought a useful preparation for the future statesman.

The Columbian Orator was introduced in 1818, and Scott's Lessons in Elocution in 1825. Declamation led to dialogue, and soon the last half of the winter term was given up to preparation for the closing exhibition. Moreover, the Hartford Theater had just been opened in 1795, and the *Connecticut Courant* in a long editorial had held it up as a worthy school of morals. The theater was to the Puritan the most alluring portal to the bottomless pit, and all that fostered a love of the drama must be crushed out. Gov. Treadwell, about the year 1800, says of the school visitors, "They have discontinued all attempts at public speaking in declamations, dialogues, and theatrical representations, as not suited to the years of the scholars, as calculated to foster pride, to raise them in their own view into men and women before their time, and like hot-beds to force a premature growth for ignorance and folly to stare at." In place of the proscribed exhibitions, there were introduced annual examinations of the first classes of all public schools of the town which took place in the meeting-house until the year 1818, when they began to be held in the "Union Hall," or upper room of the new Academy building. District vied with district in reading, spelling, and especially in saying the catechism, as they styled it. They were repeated annually until 1822. In 1841 an attempt was made to revive them, and they were held for five years. I remember attending one in

the meeting-house, March 15, 1844, in which, with the exception of a fine display by the West District School under the instruction of Mr. John N. Bartlett, now Superintendent of Schools in New Britain, the exercises were not especially interesting.

In 1816 the Farmington Academy was opened with Mr. Ephraim Goodman as principal, who was succeeded in 1823 by Simeon Hart, Jr., long known and honored by the more familiar name of Deacon Hart. Deacon Hart, who dearly loved to make boys happy, revived in that institution the old school exhibitions. An account of the entertainment concluding his first year in the Academy is preserved in the diary of a very lovely girl of sixteen. As this exhibition had some interesting peculiarities not now associated with dramatic performances, I give a few extracts. The exhibition took place November 13, 1823, in the meeting-house, where a part of the room was curtained off, and the curtains hung with festoons of roses by the young ladies of the school. She says "The scholars met at the schoolroom and walked over in procession. We had two flutes which supplied us with music between the scenes. . . . We had plenty of cake and wine behind the curtains and all was mirth and happiness. Our dialogue was the last — 'Not at Home.' — When that was through the scholars who had been engaged during the evening with speaking, formed a semi-circle on the stage and Mr. Porter stood in the center and made a prayer, which closed the exercises of the evening."

In 1826 another exhibition took place, but our youthful diarist was not among the number of the happy actors. For two years the grass had grown above her grave. Most of the actors were scholars from other towns, but a few have familiar names. One of the principal scenes was from the then very famous tragedy of Douglas, by John Home, a minister of the Kirk of Scotland. It was first represented in Edinburgh, when the delighted Scotchmen, wild with enthusiasm, exclaimed with one accord "Where is Wully Shakespeare noo." In this scene, Edward L. Hart, afterwards a very successful and beloved teacher in this town, declaimed the words so familiar to the school-boy ears of our fathers:

"My name is Norval. On the Grampian Hills  
My father feeds his flocks, a frugal swain."

and Noah Porter, Jr., now the venerable ex-president of Yale, had the part of John, and later in the evening, acted the part of a

Frenchman in a play called "The Will or the Power of Medicine." The next year N. Porter, Jr., Ralph Cowles, and Edward L. Hart, recite a colloquy "On Improvements in Education," and Winthrop M. Wadsworth, then a youth of fourteen, acts the part of John Hickory in "The Country Boy," with Timothy Pitkin, son of the Hon. Timothy Pitkin, as Hotspur. Elijah L. Lewis has the part of Philip in the play of "The Curfew," in which N. Porter, Jr., is a robber disguised as a minstrel.

The example of the Academy boys and girls excited the emulation of the scholars in the district schools, who no longer had the fear of Gov. Treadwell and the school visitors of 1800 before their eyes. The favorite plays were those of a martial order, and happy was the boy who could wear a sword, and in grandiloquent language challenge some other youth to deadly encounter.

I remember seeing the Combat in Sir Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake* enacted, James Fitz James appearing in the uniform of the Farmington Grenadiers with its Roman helmet and towering white plume, while Roderick Dhu was arrayed in the red and blue uniform, or whatever it was, of the Bushwacker Company.

Before closing the subject of schools, perhaps you will expect some mention of the Indian School in Farmington. In the year 1706 the General Assembly desired "the reverend ministers of the colony" to present to the next Assembly a plan for promoting the conversion of the natives. In 1717 they resolve "that the business of gospelizing the Indians be referred to the sessions of the Assembly in October next." The result, after a long delay, seems to have been the establishment of the somewhat famous Indian school at Mohegan, and of another at Farmington. In October, 1733, "On a report made by the Reverend Mr. Samuel Whitman of Farmington relating to the Indians in said town; This Assembly do appoint Capt. William Wadsworth and Capt. Josiah Hart of said Farmington, to provide for the dieting of the Indian youth at four shillings per week for the time they attend the school in said town." On the 27th of May, 1734, the Rev. Samuel Whitman writes to Gov. Talcott, "May it please your Honour. I understand that ye Act of Assembly relating to ye boarding out of Indian children in order to their being schooled is expired, and having a few moments to turn my thoughts on that affair, hope that ye defects in what is here brokenly offered will be overlooked. I have leisure only to inform your Honour that of the nine Indian lads that were kept at school last winter, 3 can

read well in a testament, 3 currently in a psalter, and 3 are in their primers. Testaments & psalters have been provided for those that read in them, 3 of ye Indian lads are entered in writing and one begins to write a legible hand. I thank the Assembly on their behalf for their care of ym & past bounty to them and pray that that Act of Assembly be revived and continued, not at all doubting but ye pious care of ye government for ye education of ye Indians is pleasing to heaven, and may be of advantage to some of them so yt they may be saved by coming to the knowledge of the truth. I ha'nt time to enlarge but

remain your Honour's humble and Obedient Servant

Sam<sup>l</sup> Whitman."

An itemized account was rendered of the amounts paid to Deacon Timothy Porter and seven others named, for the board of these boys. Appropriations for the school were made by the Assembly for three successive years. In the next year, 1736, instead of the annual appropriation, the General Assembly ordered a contribution for civilizing and christianizing of the Indian natives to be taken "at the next public Thanksgiving."

The contribution was duly taken, but, whether from the peculiar regard felt for the Indian or from other causes, it consisted so largely of uncurrent money that the General Assembly at its next session appointed a committee "to receive the contribution money for gospelizing the Indians and exchange the torn bills with the Treasurer."

But let us not forget the schoolmasters of the olden line. The records rarely name them. They give, with labored precision, year after year, long lists of committees, treasurers, collectors and what not, but the schoolmaster, the center and life of the whole system, and the only man we much care to know about, is rarely mentioned. Mr. James is the first master named. This was the Rev. John James, who came from England, where he had been under the instruction of a Mr. Veal, a dissenting minister. We first hear of him in January, 1683, when a committee from Haddam was chosen "to go to New London and speak with Mr. John James in reference to securing him to be our minister." In May, 1684, the town of Farmington "agreed that the town would give twenty-five pounds as a town by the year for the encouragement of Mr. James to teach school and so proportionably so long as the town and he shall agree." In December of the same year they chose a committee "to treat and agree with Mr. James for to teach

school for one year after his year agreed for is up." In December, 1686, the town of Haddam made another and probably successful attempt to secure his services, and voted "that if Mr. James stand in need of a house to live in, he shall have Mr. Noyes's house and orchard and pasture for one year."

Seven years afterwards he began to preach in Derby, where he soon became preacher, schoolmaster, and town clerk. In 1706 he was sick and disabled and removed to Wethersfield, where he died August 9, 1729, aged about 72.

Dr. Stiles, visiting the Prince Library in Boston in 1770, made some memoranda from a letter of Rev. Stephen Mix of Wethersfield, dated September 22, 1729. "He came from England, I should think, 40 years since. Devoted to Books. Was some time Pastor of the church in Derby. Some years before his death he removed hither, living a private life. Delivery very ungraceful. Died a good man." Dr. David Dudley Field, in his "Statistical Account of the Town of Haddam," says, "Some ludicrous anecdotes are transmitted respecting him, and are now widely circulated in the country;" but Dr. Field and most of the good people living in Haddam in 1819 are dead, and the aforesaid anecdotes do not seem to have survived them. The Rev. Gurdon Saltonstall, writing to John Winthrop of an attack on New London by French privateers on the morning of July 17, 1690, alludes to a Mr. James, who was without much doubt our early schoolmaster. He writes, "my wife & family was posted at your Hon<sup>rs</sup> a considerable while, it being thought to be ye most convenient place for the feminine rendezvouz. Mr. James (who commands in cheife among them) upon ye coast alarme given, faceth to ye mill, gathers like a snowball as he goes, make a generall muster at your Hon<sup>rs</sup>, and so posts away with the greatest speed, to take ye advantage of ye neighbouring rocky hills, craggy inaccessible mountaines; so that w<sup>t</sup> ever els is lost, Mr. James & ye women are safe."

In 1705 "the town by vote declared it to be their minds that Mr. Luke Hayes shall not be further employed in teaching of school." This votes implies that he had previously taught, and the title Mr. at that day cannot very well be construed to mean other than Reverend. Two years afterwards they vote that Mr. Luke Hayes shall not be further employed in teaching of school. Luke had married Elizabeth, daughter of Deacon John Langdon, deceased, and lived in the leanto of his house, which stood near the



present site of the South District schoolhouse. Elizabeth died in 1703, and Luke married Maudlin, whose maiden name was probably Daniels. She was a much-marrying woman, having had at least four husbands of various nationalities and colors. First she married Samuel, son of Rev. Samuel Street of Wallingford; next, in 1696, she married Frank Freeman of Farmington, a negro, a man of property, and an office-holder duly elected by the town. He died in a few months, and she married next Luke Hayes, who followed his predecessors in 1712; and in a little more than three years afterwards the records inform us that Maudlin Hayes, widow, on the third of May, 1716, married Dennis Hoogins of Ireland. Seven years later Maudlin is again a widow. Luke's library is inventoried as consisting of one Latin book, which, with other items, was inventoried at eighteen pence, not one-fourth of what the library of his predecessor, Frank Freeman, was valued.

From the close of the administration of Luke Hayes ten years elapse before the name of any succeeding master is recorded. On the 8th of January, 1717-8, the Ecclesiastical Society voted to pay William Lewis, schoolmaster, for teaching school the year past. It is extremely improbable that this was his first year's service, for he was now sixty years old. He was one of the sixteen children of Capt. William Lewis, a son of William Lewis, the immigrant, who arrived in Boston in the ship *Lion* on Sunday, September 16th, 1632. That William Lewis became a schoolmaster is not far to seek. His father married for his second wife Mary, daughter of Ezekiel Cheever, the famous school teacher of New England, who taught school for seventy years, at New Haven, Ipswich, Charlestown, and Boston successively. Ezekiel, a younger brother of William, preached occasionally in Farmington in 1698 after the death of Rev. Samuel Hooker, but afterwards became an assistant teacher in the Latin School of his grandfather, Ezekiel Cheever, in Boston.

Schoolmaster William lived in a house which stood on or very near the site of the Elm-Tree Inn, and was one of the seven houses which the town, on the 31st day of March, 1704, ordered to be fortified and supplied with powder, lead bullets, flints, and half-pikes. This was during the French and Indian War. Not only did Master William Lewis teach school, but the Society appointed him collector to collect of the parents of his scholars their share of the rate bill and the wood tax. For this service he was to receive "five shillings as a reward for his trouble"; but let

no one presume to envy him his reward. The effigy of Queen Anne or of George the First on the coin of the realm was a rare sight to the farmer of 1717. Year by year the town voted how taxes should be paid, and this year ordered payment in wheat at five shillings per bushel, rye at three shillings, and Indian corn at two shillings and eight pence. The office of collector was no sinecure.

It was many years before we learn the name of any succeeding master. The olden time was gone and the modern teachers are well known; nevertheless, I cannot well constrain myself from paying a brief tribute to the memory of the noblest of them all, Deacon Simeon Hart, the teacher of my boyhood. He was a member of this society, admitted in 1840, and a frequent donor to its collections. No minute account of his life is needed. To some of you his face and voice and person were a familiar benediction. Others can read of him on the printed page. I shall confine myself to a very few personal recollections. Most prominent in the character of Deacon Hart was his profound but unaffected piety. Next to his religious life, and growing out of it, through love of his fellow men, appeared his wonderful public spirit. He was no originator of brilliant schemes which ended in failure and the setting by the ears of all participants. Whatever he undertook, his remarkable practical good sense was sure to carry through, and when all was done, he invariably paid much more than his share of the expense. By his foresight and generosity was built the Farmington Female Seminary building with its wide-reaching consequences. He was the first treasurer of the Farmington Savings Bank and its principal founder. Perhaps his next most conspicuous characteristic was his love of farming. I remember hearing him deliver the annual address before the Hartford County Agricultural Society in October, 1849. The Department of Philosophy and the Arts, providing instruction in Agricultural Chemistry, had just been established in Yale College, and Professor John Pitkin Norton, with all the energy and zeal of his enthusiastic nature, was lecturing all over the country about the new science. The notion somehow was prevalent that the farmer had only to send a few pounds of soil from his farm to New Haven for analysis, and then, putting this alongside of the known analysis of the different grains, could at once know how to doctor his farm and pour untold wealth into his granaries.

The object of Deacon Hart's address was to explain what the new science really proposed. It was as successful as most attempts to popularize science. He had much to say also of what seemed to him the delightful life of the farmer, his independence, his long winter evenings for social and intellectual enjoyments, and the firm and vigorous health which crowned his labors. As a schoolmaster, he could not well refrain from closing his address with an extract from the *Georgics* of Virgil, about the fortunate husbandmen needing no lofty palaces, or gold embroidered garments, or delicate perfumes, but happy in quiet security, honest lives, and abundant riches. Anyone who ever attended school in the front basement room of his house, will doubtless remember the "Catechism of Agricultural Chemistry," edited by Prof. Norton. Other studies were somewhat optional, but that book every boy had to study. None were excused, whether intending to be farmers or merchants or professional men. It made no difference. That book they had to learn. Mr. Hart had a fondness for scientific studies, and many were the brilliant experiments he showed us in that old basement room. His experiments were always successful. He did not say "Young men, we will mix these two colorless fluids and the result will be a brilliant blue," and then have it turn out red. If he said blue, blue it was. His profound religious beliefs and his scientific knowledge did not conflict. The time for plans to harmonize religion and science annually brought out and then laid aside, had not come. I remember on one of those glorious rides to the Tower, which he gave the boys, we noticed a huge rock split from top to bottom, and when the boys asked how it came in that condition, the Deacon, doubtless having in mind a recent Sunday-school lesson, replied, that it might have occurred at the time of the crucifixion, when the earth did quake and the rocks were rent; which was not bad science for the year of grace 1846.

Such, so far as I have been able to describe them, were the schools and schoolmasters of Farmington in the Olden Time. We, in these modern days, have increased the cost of schools many fold. We have introduced studies, the very names of which were unknown to our ancestors. We teach wonders in science which they would speedily have set down to dealings with "that old deluder Sathan." The funds which their pious care provided, our towns and cities have in many cases used in payment of their

debts, and issued bonds for their children to pay. We have broadened our theology, extended our intellectual horizon, put all manner of learning within easy reach of all, but let us not forget that the men and women who went forth from the old log schoolhouse to found and preserve our free institutions and make our modern scholarship possible, have earned our profoundest gratitude, and are worthy of eternal honor.

Farmington in the War of the Revolution

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AN  
HISTORICAL ADDRESS  
DELIVERED AT THE  
ANNUAL MEETING  
OF  
THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY  
OF  
FARMINGTON, CONN.

MAY 3, 1893

=====  
*By JULIUS GAY*  
=====

HARTFORD, CONN.  
PRESS OF THE CASE, LOCKWOOD & BRAINARD COMPANY  
1893



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## ADDRESS.

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*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of Farmington :*

I propose this evening to answer, in a somewhat informal way, certain questions often asked about Farmington in the days of the Revolution. I shall have little to say of battles and campaigns, and great generals. A glimpse, and only a glimpse, we may have of Washington as he rides into the forest toward Litchfield, soon to learn of the treachery of Arnold. All these weightier matters every schoolboy knows, or ought to know. My subject lies nearer home, of little interest but to those whose grandsires here lived, and from this valley went out to preserve its liberties.

The visitor to the old cemetery, after passing through the gateway with its grim inscription, "*Memento Mori*," and climbing the steep pathway beyond, soon finds on his left a stone with this inscription: "In Memory of | Mr. Matthias Leaming | Who has got | Beyond the reach of Parcecushion. | The life of man is Vanity." There is no date of death or record of age. It is not so much the memorial of an individual as of a lost cause. Its position, facing in opposition to all the other stones, is itself a protest. Matthias Leaming was a Tory, or, as he preferred to be called, a Loyalist. At the close of the war the Tories mostly fled to England, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Canada, and in 1790 were allowed fifteen and one-half millions of dollars by the Crown, besides annuities, offices, and other gifts, in recompense for their

services and sufferings. So few remained here that we hardly realize that once, taking New England as a whole, they were as numerous and wealthy as the patriot party. We have no time to consider at length the causes of the war, but certain things we must bear in mind if we would at all understand the spirit of the times. The orators had much to say of taxation without representation, and stout Dr. Johnson replied in vigorous English that taxation was no tyranny. Other matters, however, less abstract, had gradually prepared the patriots to resist to the death this last imposition. The colonists were denied the right to manufacture for themselves almost all articles of necessity, but must import them from some Englishman whose sovereign had given him the monopoly. Their commerce was restricted to British ports. Even the agricultural products of the neighboring West Indies must first be shipped to England before they could be landed in Boston. They were denied a market either for sale or purchase outside of the dominion of Great Britain. The British merchant could say, "You shall trade at my shop or starve, and you shall make nothing for yourselves." Their solemn charters were annulled, authority to elect their principal officers was denied them, and the right to assemble in town meeting abolished. Repeatedly his Majesty asked, in a long list of questions submitted to the General Assembly of Connecticut, where his dutiful subjects bought and sold, and what they presumed to manufacture, and repeatedly he was shrewdly answered. So long as diplomacy and downright, wholesale smuggling availed, the crisis was averted, but when the wants of the British treasury, and especially of the East India Company, demanded a rigorous enforcement of the laws, the situation became intolerable. To all this was added the threat of vigorous government by lords spiritual as well

as lords temporal, from which they had once for all escaped.

The lapse of a hundred years has made the position of the loyalists, who were ready to submit to all demands of their divinely anointed king as a matter of course, a mystery to us whose habitual treatment of our highest magistrate has not trained us in habits of reverence. The graceful sentiments of Sir Walter Scott's heroine have to us an unreal sound :

“ Lands and manors pass away,  
     We but share our monarch's lot.  
 If no more our annals show  
     Battles won and banners taken,  
 Still in death, defeat, and wo,  
     Ours be loyalty unshaken ! ”

More easily can we understand the sturdy independence of the patriots. They came to these shores, not for religious freedom, which was a principle unknown, but to establish a church of their own and a government of their own, such as their consciences demanded, narrow, as our vision, broadened by two centuries, looks upon them, but established by themselves and for themselves only, where there was no one to be interfered with, and leaving in the more genial regions of the South plenty of room for the colonies of other religious proclivities. How long this exclusiveness could be maintained, time has shown. These men, to whom Church and State were one, whose religion was a covenant with God, between whom and themselves they allowed no human mediator, were the men whom George III thought to crush.

On the 31st of March, 1774, the Boston Port bill was signed, and on the 1st of June it went into effect. Its reception in this town will appear in the following letter :

“ FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT, May 19, 1774.

“ Early in the morning was found the following handbill, posted up in various parts of the town, viz. :

“To pass through the fire at six o'clock this evening, in honor to the immortal Goddess of Liberty, the late infamous act of the British Parliament for farther distressing the American colonies. The place of execution will be the public parade, where all Sons of Liberty are desired to attend.”

“Accordingly, a very numerous and respectable body were assembled, of near one thousand people, when a huge pole, just forty-five feet high, was erected, and consecrated to the shrine of Liberty; after which the act of Parliament for blocking up the Boston harbor was read aloud, sentenced to the flames, and executed by the hands of the common hangman. Then the following resolves were passed, *nem con.*”

The resolves were spirited, but too long for our present purpose.

The Rev. Samuel Peters, of Hebron, notorious as the author of “A General History of Connecticut . . . by a Gentleman of the Province,” and inventor of the so-called “Blue Laws of Connecticut,” comments on these proceedings as follows:

“Farmington burnt the act of Parliament in great contempt by their common hangman, when a thousand of her best inhabitants were convened for that glorious purpose of committing treason against the king; for which vile conduct they have not been styled a pest to Connecticut, and enemies to common sense, either by his Honor or any king's attorney, or in any town meeting. We sincerely wish and hope a day will be set apart by his Honor very soon for fasting and prayer throughout this colony, that the sins of those haughty people may not be laid to our charge.”

We shall hear enough of fast days, but they were not proclaimed to bewail the sins of Farmington.

The situation of the once flourishing port of Boston was now most critical, and donations for the relief of its suffering inhabitants flowed in from the surrounding towns. The action of this town on the 15th of June is chronicled at length in the admirable discourse of President Porter. The following is a letter written by Samuel Adams in response to this action, addressed “To Fisher

Gay, Esq., and the rest of the Committee in Farmington, Connecticut.

"BOSTON, July 29, 1774.

"*Sir*,—I am desired by the Committee of the Town of Boston, appointed to receive the donations made by our sympathizing brethren, for the employment or relief of such inhabitants of this town as are more immediate sufferers by the cruel act of Parliament for shutting up this harbor, to acquaint you that our friend, Mr. Barrett, has communicated to them your letter of the 25th instant, advising that you have shipped, per Captain Israel Williams, between three and four hundred bushels of rye and Indian corn for the above-mentioned purpose, and that you have the subscriptions still open, and expect after harvest to ship a much larger quantity. Mr. Barrett tells us that upon the arrival of Captain Williams he will endorse this bill of lading or receipt to us.

"The Committee have a very grateful sense of the generosity of their friends in Farmington, who may depend upon their donations being applied agreeable to their benevolent intention, as it is a great satisfaction to the Committee to find the Continent so united in opinion. The town of Boston is now suffering for the common liberties of America, and while they are aided and supported by their friends, I am persuaded they will struggle through the conflict, firm and steady.

"I am, with very great regard, gentlemen,

"Your friend and countryman,

"SAMUEL ADAMS."

Five weeks later, on the 3d of September, the following agreement was drawn up in the handwriting of Major William Judd, and bears the signatures of seventy of the principal inhabitants of this village:

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribers, promise and engage to be in readiness and duly equipt with arms and ammunition to proceed to Boston for the relief of our distressed and besieged brethren there, and to be under the direction of such officers as shall be by us appointed, as witness our hands this 3d day of September, A. D. 1774."

A roll of honor on which we may well be pleased to see the names of our ancestors recorded.

Town meetings followed in quick succession. On the 20th of September the Rev. Levi Hart of Preston was invited to preach to the assembled freemen of Farmington on Liberty. He preached them a sermon on "Liberty Described and Recommended," but his text must have sounded strangely in their ears as he read, "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption." There was not a word about British tyranny, but a fervid discourse to our merchant princes on the horrors of the slave trade.

Strange doctrine this. Did not the good men of that day rejoice in thus delivering benighted souls from the heathen darkness of Africa? West India shippers, not only of this, but of all trading communities, universally engaged in the traffic. Times have changed. Let us judge men by the light of their own day. We, no doubt, will need like favor badly enough an hundred years hence.

The meeting, at the close of the discourse, proceeded to vote thirty hundred-weight of lead, ten thousand French flints, and thirty six barrels of powder. A little later they voted "that the several constables should have a large staff provided for each of them with the King's arms upon them." The authority of the King was as yet unquestioned.

On the 12th of December the town approved of the Association of the Continental Congress and appointed a Committee of Inspection to carry out its provisions. This committee of fifty-two men at once met at the tavern of Amos Cowles, and while they are busy with the public good, and, very likely, with the good of the house, let us take a little rest from the contemplation of these warlike proceedings and look about us. The inn of Amos Cowles stood just south of the church, on or about the site of the house of the late Chauncey D. Cowles, Esq. It has long

since disappeared, as have all but about a half-dozen of the houses of that day, and they, for the most part, have been reconstructed past recognition. The village street, certainly not since broadened with age, ran as now, and along it passed the pedestrian, the horseback rider, and the unwieldy cart of the farmer. Pleasure carriages were unknown. When the minister of that day brought home his bride in the first chaise his parishoners had ever seen they lined the street to welcome him, and the first man who caught sight of the coming chaise shouted, "The cart is coming." Mail coaches were unknown. In 1778 Joseph Root advertised in *The Connecticut Courant* as follows :

"This is to notify those that have friends in General Parsons' brigade that I have undertook to ride post for the town of Farmington, the letters to be left at my house and at Landlord Adams', Southington; at Landlord Smith's, New Britain; at Landlord Hayes', Salmon Brook; at Esq. Owen's, Simsbury; at Joseph Kellogg's, New Hartford, and at Robert Mecune's, at Winchester. Those who have letters to send are desired to leave them at either of the above places by the first day of next month, at which time I shall set out.

JOSEPH ROOT.

"N. B. Letters may also be left at Lieut. Heth's, West Hartford, and at Landlord Butler's in Hartford.

"FARMINGTON, June 12, 1778."

The travel between the two capitals of the colony then, as now, passed on the other side of the mountain through Wethersfield and Wallingford, but the exigencies of war required new lines of communication, and this quiet street was soon to be familiar with the measured tread of armies. Thomas Lewis, writing to Lieut. Amos Wadsworth at Roxbury Camp, says :

"The same night" (that is, July 19, 1775,) "lodged in this town a captain with a company of riflemen, who appeared to be, many of them, very likely young gentlemen. The officers informed me a great number of their soldiers were men possessed

with fortunes worth three or four thousand apiece. These are from Philadelphia and on their march to join the army. The Captain told me he expected one thousand more of the same troops would pass the town next week for the like purpose."

After the evacuation of Boston the line of communication from Newport and Hartford to the Highlands above New York passed through this village.

Here in 1781 marched the army of Rochambeau. The diary of one of his aids, accompanied with a map of the route, records, under date of June 24th :

"In the afternoon I went to see a charming spot called Wethersfield, four miles from East Hartford. It would be impossible to find prettier houses and a more beautiful view. I went up into the steeple of the church and saw the richest country I had yet seen in America. From this spot you can see for fifty miles around.

"June 25. In the morning the army resumed its march to reach Farmington. The country is more open than that we had passed over since our departure, and the road fine enough. The village is considerable, and the position of the camp, which is a mile and a half from it, was one of the most fortunate we had as yet occupied."

On the return of the army in 1782 Rochambeau made a halt in Farmington on the 29th of October, and the next day in Hartford.

Of the journeys of Washington through this town he leaves us but brief mention. In May, 1781, he writes :

"I begin at this epoch a concise journal of military transactions, etc. I lament not having attempted it from the commencement of the war."

In this journal he writes :

"May 19th. Breakfasted at Litchfield, dined at Farmington, and lodged at Wethersfield."

Also :

"May 24th. Set out on my return to New Windsor, dined at Farmington, and lodged at Litchfield."



This is all we gather from his own writing, but we know that on the 18th of September, 1780, he bade adieu to General Arnold at Peekskill and was in Hartford on the 21st. The commonly traveled road between the places lay through Farmington. After his conference with Rochambeau, he leaves Hartford on the 23d and arrives at Litchfield on the same day. Two days later he heard of the flight of Arnold. On the 2d of March, 1781, he left New Windsor, and arrived at Hartford on the 4th, and, returning on Sunday the 18th, was back at his headquarters at New Windsor on the 20th. He seems, therefore, to have passed through Farmington six times: on the 20th and 23d of September, 1780, the 4th and 18th of March, 1781, and the 19th and 24th of May, 1781.

What house had the honor of entertaining his Excellency is uncertain. An idle tradition one hears over and over again tells us that once, being overtaken by a sudden storm, Washington took refuge in the newly erected meeting-house, but if there is any one with any military experience before me, I will leave him to determine into which the General would most likely turn his steps, the hospitable inn of Amos Cowles, or the house of God with closed doors, standing there side by side. The means of entertainment at that day were ample. As he rode down the mountain slope from the east and first came in sight of the meeting-house spire, the tavern of Samuel North, Jr., greeted him on the left. A little farther on, where the Elm Tree Inn now stands, Mr. Phineas Lewis would have been happy to entertain the General. He could also have been cordially welcomed by Mr. Seth Lee, where are now the brick school buildings of Miss Porter. If he succeeded in passing all these attractions, the newly erected inn of Mr. Asahel Wadsworth, grandfather of the late Winthrop M. Wadsworth, Esq., hung out its sign, and just as he turned off from the main street into the wilder-

ness toward Litchfield there was still the well-known inn of Captain Solomon Cowles to prepare him for the rough journey before him. This last tavern was famous in its day. The weary teamster on his journey with supplies for the army hailed it with delight. One Joseph Joslin, Jr., a revolutionary teamster from Killingly, left a racy diary which ought to please the modern advocates of phonetic spelling. He says:

"April 21, 1777. We set out again and went through Harwinton into Farmington, and it was very bad carting indeed, I declare, and we stayed at a very good tavern, old Captain Coles', and we fare well, and did lie in a bed, I think."

The hay mow by the side of his cattle was usually considered good enough for a revolutionary teamster. Three days later he says:

"I went to Farmington to old Captain Coles' again."

But alas! the hopes of man are deceitful. It was a Fast day, and all he could get was a little cold, raw pork. But it is time for us to return to our Committee of Inspection, whom we left at the house of Amos Cowles. William Judd was made chairman and John Treadwell clerk, and their business was to carry out the requirements of the fourteen articles of the Association of the Continental Congress. This agreement, signed by the representatives of the twelve colonies at Philadelphia on the 20th of October, 1774, was not so much sustained by law as by the merciless power of public opinion. The transgressor was looked upon as Achan with his wedge of gold in the Israelitish camp before Jericho. A single instance will illustrate the spirit of the times and help you to understand what is to follow. Samuel Smith, merchant, of New Britain, had been convicted by Isaac Lee, Jr., justice of the peace, of selling metheglin at too high a price, namely, at eight shillings the gallon, and hens' eggs at

the enormous price of one shilling the dozen. He brought his humble petition to the General Assembly, in which he says:

“But when your memorialist reflects on the disability he is under, a sort of political death or disfranchisement which must render him incapable either to provide for or save himself from insult, or to serve the public in this time of calamity, which he always has and still wishes to do, he cannot but in the most humble manner pray this honorable Assembly to take your memorialist's case into your wise consideration and grant that he may be restored to his former freedom.”

The petition was signed by Justice Lee and twenty-six of the principal men of New Britain. The Assembly promptly granted his petition. Our committee held several meetings, and considered numerous complaints which the Sons of Liberty had to make concerning the patriotism of their neighbors and of each other. It required cool heads and ripe wisdom to satisfy this red-hot zeal and do justice to all offenders. I will note only a few representative cases. Samuel Scott was accused of laboring on a Continental Fast day. This solemn day was to be kept with all the strictness of the Jewish Sabbath, and in its entirety. “Thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates.” It was not alleged that he had himself performed any labor on that sacred day, but there was some suspicion that one of his hired men might have done some work not strictly necessary. For this and similar cases the committee drew up a form of confession, in which the accused affirmed his fervid patriotism and regretted any breach of the fourteen articles he might possibly have been guilty of. Another case made our worthy committee more trouble. Captain Solomon Cowles and Martha, his wife, were complained of for allowing Seth Bird of Litchfield

and Daniel Sheldon of Woodbury to drink India tea at their tavern. From the time of the destruction of the tea in Boston harbor nothing so roused the wrath of the patriots as any dalliance with this forbidden luxury. Their wives, who had patriotically abstained from their darling beverage and looked with regretful eyes on their unused china, could not endure such intemperance as this. The guilty parties printed their humble apology in *The Connecticut Courant*. Seth Bird was exceedingly wroth, and published in the next paper his version of the affair, this tempest in a teapot, as it seems to us, laying all the blame on the landlady, and accusing her and the committee of making him infamous. It was the old story of the forbidden fruit and the ignoble reply, "The woman gave me and I did eat." He says:

"About the middle of the month of March last past I called for breakfast at Captain Solomon Cowles'. The landlady said she would get some, and asked what would suit, and added, says she, 'I suppose you don't drink tea.' I answered that I had not practised it, to be sure, since March came in, but as I feel this morning it would not wrong my conscience to drink a dish or two, if I could come at it, for I had a new cold by riding in the wet the night before and had slept very little, etc. The landlady replied that if I felt unwell she supposed she might get me some, and accordingly went and prepared it, and I drank thereof."

The committee do not seem to have taken any notice of Mr. Bird's disrespectful paper. Litchfield was a far country, and, like the immortal Dogberry, they no doubt thanked God they were well rid of one offender. More serious still were the complaints against the Tories. Some one petitioned that Nehemiah Royce, "a person politically excommunicated," be prevented from sending his children to the public school. The committee wisely declined any such action, and, moreover, voted that the evidence against him "is not sufficient to justify the com-

mittee in advertising said Royce in the gazette." Every week there appeared on the first page of *The Courant*, in the blackest type Mr. Watson possessed, a list of enemies of their country, and confessions from parties accused appeared from every part of the State. Matthias Leaming, they voted, should be advertised in the public gazette "for a contumacious violation of the whole Association of the Continental Congress," and then voted to defer the execution of their sentence. By the middle of the following September the committee had had enough of the business, and voted "to request a dismission from the office, it being too burthensome to be executed by them for a longer time." A new committee was appointed, who passed a few votes, and then we hear no more of them. There were more important matters to occupy the public mind. The persecution of Matthias Leaming, however, was not yet ended. As late as 1783 his petition to the General Assembly sets forth that, being involved in debt, he had conveyed his real estate to a brother without his knowledge and without receiving one penny in consideration. Unfortunately for Matthias, his brother joined the enemy in New York, and the land, being found recorded in his name, was confiscated.

A very long and minute report by the legislative committee is on file, in which they decided adversely. Three years later another long memorial met the same fate, but in 1787 the Assembly gave him £80 in treasury notes, payable on the 1st of the next February. Before that day the treasury was virtually bankrupt. In October, 1788, Governor Treadwell drew up another memorial, and persuaded Rev. Timothy Pitkin, Col. Noadiah Hooker, and twelve others of the most prominent men of the village to petition the Assembly to assist him in his old age and distress. No action was taken. The treasury was powerless to help. No doubt the Tories were treated roughly.

Some lost their lands by confiscation. Some were hung. It is very easy to sit by the quiet firesides which the valor of patriotic fathers secured us and coolly moralize on their severity. War is not a lovely thing, least of all, civil war. The sight of neighbors with whom we were wont to hold pleasant converse arrayed against us, side by side with hired mercenaries and scalping savages, rouses passions slumbering deep down in human nature, which war always has and always will arouse, moralize as we will, so long as warm blood flows in human veins. A single letter written by Dr. Timothy Hosmer of this village to Ensign Amos Wadsworth July 30, 1775, illustrates the spirit of the times, and is, perhaps, quite enough to say about Whig and Tory hatred. He says :

" The first act I shall give you is concerning the grand Continental Fast as conducted by that great friend to administration, the Rev. John Smalley. The Sunday before the Fast, after service, he read the proclamation, and then told his people that fasting and prayer were no doubt a Christian duty, and that they ought in times of trouble to set apart a suitable time to celebrate a fast, but they were not obliged to keep the day by that proclamation, as they (the Congress) had no power to command, but only to recommend, and desired they would speak their minds by a vote, whether they would keep the day. The vote was accordingly called for, and it appeared to be a scant vote, though they met on the Fast day and he preached to them. We look upon it as implicitly denying all authority of Congress. It hath awakened his best friends against him. Even Lieut. Porter, Mr. Bull, and John Treadwell say they cannot see any excuse for him, and I believe the committee will take up the matter and call him to answer for his conduct. There hath happened a terrible rumpus at Waterbury with the Tories there. Capt. Nicholl's son, Josiah, enlisted under Capt. Porter in Gen. Wooster's regiment, went down to New York with the regiment, tarried a short time, and deserted . . . came home and kept a little under covert, but goes down to Saybrook and there enlisted with Capt. Shipman . . . got his bounty and rushed off again. Capt. Shipman came up after him . . . and went with some people they had got

to assist them to Lemuel Nicholl's, where they supposed he was. Lemuel forbade their coming in, and presented a sword and told them it was death to the first that offered to enter, but one young man seized the sword by the blade and wrenched it out of his hands. They bound him and made a search through the house, but could find nothing of Josiah. The Tories all mustered to defend him, and finally got Lemuel from them and he and Josiah pushed off where they cannot be found. This ran through Thursday. The Whigs sent over to Southington for help, and the people almost all went from Southington on Friday. They took Capt. Nicholls, whom they found on his belly over in his lot, in a bunch of alders, carried him before Esq. Hopkins, and had him bound over to the County Court at New Haven. . . . They had near 100 Tories collected upon the occasion, and were together till ten o'clock Friday night. They dispersed and there was nothing done to humble them, but I apprehend the next opportunity I have to write I shall be able to inform you that Smalley and they, too, will be handled."

If the Rev. Dr. Smalley of New Britain, eminent divine and esteemed pastor, had not at this time determined which cause to espouse, there was no doubt in the mind of the pastor of the church in Farmington, the Rev. Timothy Pitkin. His pulpit rang with fervid discourses on liberty. He visited his parishioners in their camp, and wrote them letters of encouragement and sympathy. To Amos Wadsworth, in camp at Roxbury, he writes:

"These wait on you as a token of my friendship. Truly I feel for my native, bleeding country, and am embarked with you in one common cause. . . . What you may be called to is unknown. I wish you may fill up your new department with wisdom, courage, and decorum. My hope is yet in God, the Lord of Hosts and God of Armies."

To the first company of soldiers marching from Simsbury he preached a farewell sermon from the words, "Play the man for your country, and for the cities of your God; and the Lord do that which seemeth Him good."

At the opening of the war there stood at the south-

west corner of Main street and the Meadow lane, as it was called, a shop where Amos and Fenn Wadsworth advertised to sell drugs, groceries, etc., etc. Amos, the elder brother, was one of the first soldiers to march to Boston, and it is from his extensive correspondence, together with the orderly-book of Roger Hooker and the diary of Deacon Samuel Richards, that most of our knowledge of Farmington men in the war is derived. The first Farmington company commenced its march on the 18th of May, 1775, being the 6th company of General Joseph Spencer's regiment. The officers were Noadiah Hooker, Captain; Peter Curtiss and Joseph Byington, Lieutenants; Amos Wadsworth, Ensign, and Roger Hooker, Orderly-Sergeant. They were eight days on their march, resting one rainy day at Thompson. They were stationed at Roxbury and there remained during the siege. They were therefore at a distance from Bunker Hill and took no part in the battle of June 17th. Deacon Richards, however, gives a description of the battle as he saw it from elevated ground at Roxbury. With the exception of this one battle, the whole army was kept in inglorious inactivity for want of powder, seldom returning the fire from the batteries in Boston. Deacon Richards says:

"The almost constant fire of the enemy produced one effect probably not contemplated by them: it hardened our soldiers rapidly to stand and bear fire. When their balls had fallen and became still the men would strive to be the first to pick them up to carry to a sutler to exchange for spirits. At one time they came near paying dear for their temerity. A bomb had fallen into a barn, and in the daytime it could not be distinguished from a cannon ball in its passage. A number were rushing in to seize it when it burst and shattered the barn very much, but without injuring any one. . . . One night a ball passed through my apartment in the barracks, a few feet over me, as I lay in my berth. Such things, having become common, we thought little of them."



The troops before Boston were mostly farmers, each at home the absolute lord of his broad acres, impatient of military discipline, and a sore trial to the patience of Washington. Over and over again Orderly-Sergeant Roger Hooker records, "It is with astonishment the General finds," etc., etc. On the 4th of August it is

"With indignation and shame the General observes that, notwithstanding the repeated orders which have been given to prevent the firing of guns in and about the camp which is daily practised, that, contrary to all orders, straggling soldiers do still pass the guards and fire at a distance where there is not the least probability of hurting the enemy, and where there is no end answered but to waste their ammunition and keep their own camp in a continual alarm, to the hurt and detriment of every good soldier who is thereby disturbed of his natural rest, and at length will never be able to distinguish between the real and false alarm."

Occasionally the men were allowed to gratify their restlessness in certain madcap adventures. On the 12th of June Amos Wadsworth writes:

"A week ago last Friday about one hundred of our men went to one of the islands to assist some of the Whigs in getting off their families and effects. They brought off about 500 sheep, some cattle and horses, and took a boat belonging to one of the transport ships with three men as they were fishing near the shore. They secured the men and drew out the boat in plain sight of a man-of-war. The ship twice manned out her boats and set off, but put back without doing anything more. Our men got a team and cart, loaded the boat into the cart, hoisted her sails, set the two commanding officers in the stern of the boat, and the three prisoners rowing, and in this manner drove on as far as Cambridge, where they confined their prisoners in gaol. . . . Eight of our company were in the expedition. She is now launched in a large pond about 100 rods from us, very convenient for us to fish and sail in."

Amos Wadsworth, Roger Hooker, and others of their company were in the somewhat famous boat expedition of July 11th. Amos writes:

"It was necessary for us to take the night for the business, as we had several ships of war to pass. We lay till after sundown, and then manned out 45 whale boats and set off for Long Island in order to take whatever we could find on the island. About 11 o'clock arrived at the island, and landed without opposition, and drove off 19 cattle, about 100 sheep, 1 horse, 4 hogs. The island lies between the lighthouse and Castle, and, we supposed, was guarded by a party of regulars. The island is about one and one-half miles long, and one large house on it, which contained considerable furniture, which we carried off the most of it. We took 19 prisoners on the island, two of whom were women, one a young lady a native of Boston, who, they said, was to have been married to the captain of the King's store ship the next week. The most of the prisoners, we suppose, were marines and sailors sent on shore to cut hay for the use of the troops in Boston. . . . We towed the cattle near two miles at the stern of the boats to another island, where we landed them, and a part of the men drove them at low water to the main land. There were 7 ships lying so near the shore that we could hear people talk on board them, though not distinctly, and see the ships plain. I can give no reason why they did not fire on us. After we had returned as far as Dorchester with the boats the prisoners said there was something of value left in the house. We 'got to Dorchester Wednesday morning about 6 o'clock. Ten boats were manned out with fresh hands to go and make farther search and burn the barn and hay. They landed in the daytime, and were attacked by a number of the King's troops in a boat and an armed schooner, which fired grape-shot and obliged them to retreat with the loss of one man. However, they fired the house and barn before they left the island, but had not time to get much furniture on board, nor was there much for them, as we brought off all the beds, chairs, tables, a considerable quantity of wool, cupboard furniture, etc."

Amos wrote many entertaining letters which I have no time to quote at length. He gave to his brother Fenn, who kept the shop in his absence, minute directions for preparing those tremendous medical compounds which were supposed to suit the hardy constitutions of our ancestors. His orders about clothing would horrify the trim

militia man of our time. Every man in the army dressed as seemed good unto himself. There were no uniforms. Deacon Elijah Porter, Farmington's first librarian, is said, on the authority of another deacon, to have worn his wedding suit to the war. Orderly-Sergeant Roger Hooker records on the 14th of June :

"That no man appear for any duty, except fatigue, with long trousers, or without stockings and shoes."

After Washington took command the orderly-book announces that the officers

"Be distinguished in the following manner. The Commander-in-Chief with a light blue ribbon worn across his breast between his coat and vest. The Major and Brigadier-Generals with a pink ribbon in the same manner, and the Aids-de-Camp by a green ribbon."

Colonel Fisher Gay writes, February 26th :

"Was Officer of the Day. . . . 27th, returned the sash . . . at 9 o'clock and made report to Gen. Ward."

This sash or ribbon seems to have been the means of distinguishing officers from privates. On the 4th of September Lieut. Wadsworth was on the point of joining Arnold's expedition against Quebec, but was dissuaded by his friends. Almost the next we hear of him is the account of his funeral, celebrated with much military display on the 30th of October, the day after his death. The procession was headed by an advance guard of twenty men with reversed arms, followed by the Sergeants as bearers. The coffin was covered with black velvet and bore two crossed swords. Then followed the mourners, his mother and brother, the regiment under arms, and the officers of the other regiments. The musicians played the tune, "Funeral Thoughts," and at the end of every line the drums beat one stroke. The march was a

mile and a half long, and during the last half-mile the Brookline bell tolled constantly. His monument stands to-day in the old cemetery of Brookline. His brother Fenn soon entered the army, and was for several years one of the Committee of the Pay Table in Hartford. He died just after the close of the war, and a monument in Saratoga marks his resting-place.

From this point our sources of information about Farmington men in the war are sadly lessened. The orderly-book of Roger Hooker closes with his promotion to be Second Lieutenant under Ebenezer Sumner, Captain of the 5th Company in the 22d Regiment, which office he was holding as early as December 11th. On the 2d of February, 1776, begins the short diary of Colonel Fisher Gay. He says:

"Set off for headquarters to join the army under command of General Washington before Boston, and arrived at Roxbury the 6th of said month. Stationed at Roxbury with the regiment I belonged to, and quartered at Mr. Wyman's with Col. Wolcott and Mr. Perry. Was sent for by General Washington to wait on his Excellency the 13th of said month, and was ordered by the General to go to Connecticut to purchase all the gunpowder I could. Went to Providence, and from thence to Gov. Trumbull, where I obtained 2 tons of the Governor, and then to New London to Mr. T[homas] Mumford, and obtained of him an order on Messrs. Clark & Nightingill, merchants in Providence, and returned to camp the 19th, and made report to the General to his great satisfaction."

On Sunday, March 17th, he writes:

"Col. Wolcott on the hill. An alarm in the morning. I ordered the regiment to meet before the Colonel's door after prayers. I marched them off with Major Chester. Near the alarm post found, instead of going to action, the enemy had abandoned Boston. 500 troops immediately ordered to march into and take possession of the fortifications in Boston. Col. Larned, myself, Majors Sproat and Chester, with a number of other officers

and troops, marched in and took possession, and tarried there till the 19th at night, then returned to camp at Roxbury. Never people more glad at the departure of an enemy and to see friends."

Deacon Samuel Richards also tells of the entry into Boston in his "Personal Narrative." He says:

"I had the gratification of being selected to carry the American flag at the head of the column which entered from the Roxbury side. When arrived in the town numerous incidents crowded upon our view. I can particularize but few of them. The burst of joy shown in the countenances of our friends so long shut up and domineered over by an insulting enemy; the meeting and mutual salutations of parents and children, and other members of families, having been separated by the sudden shutting up of the town after the battle of Lexington; the general dilapidation of the houses, several churches emptied of all the inside work and turned into riding-schools for the cavalry; all the places which had been previously used for public resort torn to pieces. As I was the bearer of the flag, I attracted some attention and was constantly pressed with invitations to 'call in and take a glass of wine with me.'"

On the day before the evacuation of Boston Governor Trumbull closes a letter with the exclamation:

"Hitherto the Lord hath helped us. Although they came against us with a great multitude and are using great artifice, yet let our eyes be on the Lord of Hosts and our trust in Him."

And then adds:

"P. S. This moment received a letter from headquarters requesting me to throw two thousand men into New York from the frontiers of Connecticut to maintain the place until the General can arrive with the army under his command."

In response thereto the Farmington soldiers marched by way of Providence to New London, where they took ship, and, after running upon a rock in Hell Gate, finally reached New York in safety. Here, on the 22d of August, shortly before the Americans were driven from the city,

died Colonel Fisher Gay. A not very well authenticated tradition affirms that he was buried in Trinity Churchyard.

With New York in possession of the enemy, the towns on the coast were exposed to raid by the British and Tories. This, with the scarcity of provisions in New Haven, caused the corporation of Yale College to send the freshman class to Farmington, the sophomore and junior classes to Glastonbury, and the seniors to Wethersfield, to meet at these respective places on the 27th of May, 1777. Again they advertise that the sophomore class is ordered to meet at Farmington October 22, 1777 :

"Where provision is made for their residence. We could wish to have found suitable accommodations for the senior class, and have taken great pains to effect it, but hitherto without success."

Here came their tutor, the Rev. John Lewis, and here in the old cemetery you will find a stone recording the birth and death in this village of his son, John Livy.

After the surrender of Burgoyne, General Gates ordered the captured artillery sent to Connecticut for safety, and a memorial to the General Assembly states that Colonel Ichabod Norton, grandfather of the late John T. Norton, Esq., was ordered

"To take the command of a company and proceed to Albany for the purpose of guarding the cannon taken from Gen. Burgoyne the last campaign, ordered to be removed to said Farmington."

After the expedition was well under way the snow disappeared, and the men were a fortnight dragging the heavy pieces through the mud. They were finally stored in the orchard of John Mix, where they remained a considerable time.

During the remainder of the war the Farmington soldiers were located almost exclusively in the Highlands

above New York. Of the first occupancy of West Point, Deacon Richards says:

"I being at the time senior officer of the regiment present, of course led on the regiment, crossing the river on the ice. . . . Coming on to the small plain surrounded by the mountains, we found it covered with a growth of yellow pines ten or fifteen feet high; no house or improvement on it; the snow waist high. We fell to lopping down the tops of the shrub pines and treading down the snow, spread our blankets, and lodged in that condition the first and second nights."

Concerning this same affair Deacon Elijah Porter says in his journal:

"When Gen. Putnam was ready to go over on the ice he called me to come to him. He then loaded me with tools for building huts, and took a heavy load himself, and bade me follow him. When we got about half a mile on the ice, he went on some shelly ice, began to slip about, and down he went with his load of tools and made the ice crack so that I thought he would go down, but the ice held him up, and I sprang round and picked up his tools and loaded him up again. We went on and arrived safe on the point."

Deacon Porter soon returned home and his journal closes, but Deacon Richards remained at West Point and was an eye-witness of the execution of Andre. To Timothy Hosmer, formerly the village doctor of Farmington, and now army surgeon, was assigned the duty of laying his finger on Andre's pulse and reporting him dead.

Deacon Richards was at West Point during the building of the fortifications the subsequent spring under the direction of Kosciusko. He says:

"I was quartered a considerable time with him in the same log hut, and soon discovered in him an elevation of mind which gave fair promise of those high achievements to which he attained. His manners were soft and conciliating and at the same time ele-

vated. I used to take much pleasure in accompanying him about with his theodolite, measuring the heights of the surrounding mountains. He was very ready in mathematics. Our family now consisted of Brigadier-General Parsons, Doctor, afterwards President Dwight, Kosciusko, and myself, with the domestics. . . . When the weather had become mild and pleasant in April, I went one day with Dr. Dwight down to view the ruins of Fort Montgomery, distant about eight or ten miles. There was a pond just north of the fort, where we found the British had thrown in the bodies of their own and our men who fell in the assault of the fort."

He closes a very gruesome account of the spectacle with the exclamation :

"Had the fort held out a little longer, I very probably might have lain among them."

I shall close this rambling paper with a notice of a proposed invasion of this quiet village, a bill for which actually passed the Lower House of the General Assembly near the close of the war in 1781 :

"Resolved by this Assembly that considering the peculiar difficulty that many of the members of this Assembly meet with in procuring subsistence for themselves and forage for their horses, it is expedient this Assembly be adjourned to the town of Farmington to transact and complete the business of the present session, as soon as proper accommodations can be made and that the selectmen of said town be desired to make the necessary preparation for the reception of the Assembly as soon as possible.

"Passed in the Lower House,

"Test, JOHN TREADWELL, Clerk, P. T."

The reply to this request by the Selectmen of Farmington was as follows :

"To the Honorable Lower House of Assembly now sitting in Hartford. Being desired by your Honors to make inquiry whether the General Assembly may be accommodated in their present sessions in this town, we have to observe that from the knowledge we have of the circumstances of the inhabitants, we are of the



opinion that should the Honorable Assembly signify their determination to adjourn to this place, the members might be conveniently, though perhaps not elegantly subsisted, and their horses well provided. The greatest difficulty will be to provide a house in which it would be convenient to transact business. The Meeting House, though elegant and well finished, would be inconvenient for want of a fire at this inclement season. The dwelling house of Mr. Asahel Wadsworth, situate in the center of the town, may be obtained for the purpose, and is as convenient as any in the town. It is 42 feet in length and about 22 in breadth. The rooms on the lower floor finished, and one of them may well accommodate the Honorable Upper House. There are two stacks of chimnies, one at each end. The chambers are unfurnished, the floor laid but not divided into several apartments. One fire place is finished, and the room, if proper seats were made, which might soon be done, would be large enough for the Lower House. The house is covered with jointed boards and clapboards upon them, but neither ceiled nor plastered. This is an exact description of Mr. Wadsworth's house, and if the Honorable Assembly shall judge it will answer the purpose, upon suitable notice might be accommodated and other preparation made in a short time.

"We are, with sentiments of the highest esteem and regard,

"Your Honors' most obedient and most humble servants.

"FARMINGTON, February 26, 1781.

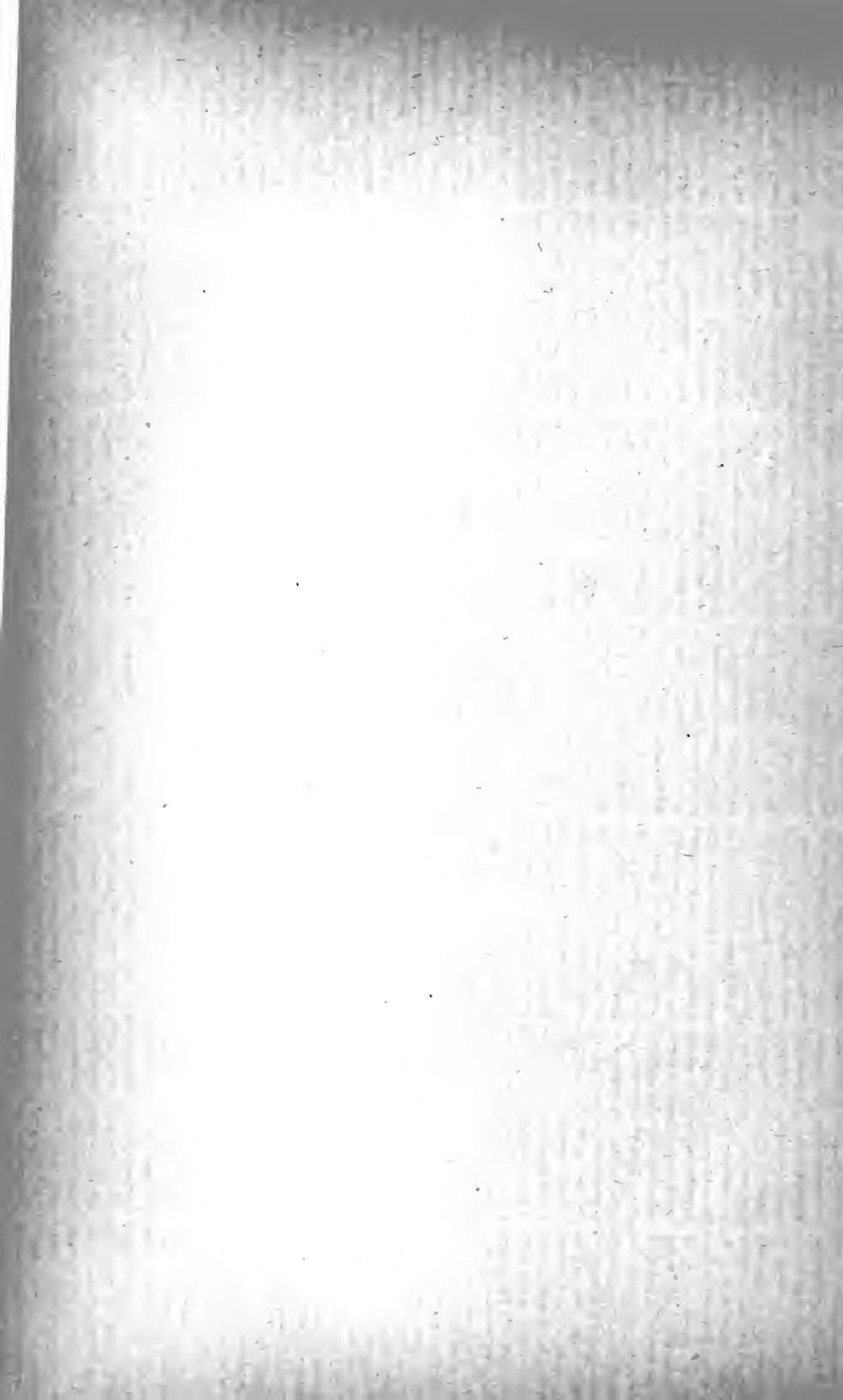
JAMES JUDD,        { Selectmen  
ISAAC BIDWELL, } of Farmington.

A letter from Elijah Hubbard offering the Assembly accommodations at Middletown equally magnificent was also sent.

Time fails to speak of the after-life of these worthy men, of William Judd, famous in the political history of the State; of John Treadwell, last of the Puritan Governors of Connecticut; of Samuel Richards, first postmaster of Farmington; of Roger Hooker, sitting of a summer evening under his noble elm tree and delighting the assembled youth of the village with tales of a seafaring youth, of shipwreck, and of his long service in the

Continental army ; of Timothy Hosmer, village doctor, army surgeon, judge of Ontario county, New York, and pioneer settler of that western wilderness ; of Noadiah Hooker, honored with many public trusts, and finally, as a white-haired old man, standing on the hillside above Whitehall and dropping a not unmanly tear over the graves of a hundred of his soldiers buried by him during the terrible days of the pestilence at Skenesborough ; of John Mix, for twenty-six years the representative of this town to the General Assembly of the State, and of Timothy Pitkin, welcoming his children home from their victorious struggle, their beloved pastor and faithful friend. There were other, many other, worthy men of whom we would know more, who deserved well of their country. If this paper shall prompt any one to preserve the scanty memorials of them which still exist, my labor this evening will not have been in vain.





OLD HOUSES IN FARMINGTON

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AN  
HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

Annual Meeting

OF

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY

OF

FARMINGTON, CONN.

*May 1, 1895*

— ★ —  
BY JULIUS GAY  
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HARTFORD, CONN.

Press of The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company

1895



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BY JULIUS GAY



HARTFORD, CONN.

Press of The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company

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## ADDRESS.

*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of  
Farmington :*

I have been requested to speak this evening of the old houses of Farmington and of some of the people who lived in them. If my paper be not very profound with great events and much learning, it may perhaps none the less, for a passing hour, revive the fast-fading picture of our ancestors, their virtues and their foibles.

In the winter of 1639, when the town of Hartford had been founded three and one-half years, and Windsor and Wethersfield about the same time, all three towns began to think their broad acres too limited, and applied to the General Court "for some enlargement of accommodation." A committee was appointed to view the valley of the Tunxis and report on the 20th of February, but Windsor was busy building a bridge and a meeting house, and their neighbors of Wethersfield objected to the wintry weather; so the Court added to the committee Capt. John Mason, who had recently rid the colony of 600 or 700 Pequots, and who brought the Court on the 15th of June following to order the Particular Court "to conclude the conditions for the planting of Tunxis."

Five years thereafter, in 1645, the village of Tunxis Sepus, literally the village at the bend of the little river, became by legislative enactment the town of Farmington.

The settlers found the natural features of the place much as we see them to-day. To the east of the main street their lots extended to the mountain, and on the

west to the river, beyond which fertile meadows spread away to the western hills, undisfigured for more than one hundred years by divisional fences, a broad panorama of waving grain and green corn fields.

The land was indeed owned in severalty, but annually the proprietors voted on what day in October they would use it for pasturage, and on what day in April all must remove their flocks and herds. Access to this common field was through the North Meadow Gate just west of the Catholic church, or through the South Meadow Gate near the Pequabuc stone bridge. Along the main street houses began to rise, log huts at first, each provided by law with a ladder reaching to the ridge to be examined every six months by the chimney-viewers. In 1711 the town granted fourscore acres of land to encourage the erection of a saw-mill, but long before this time frame houses had been built, the sides covered with short clapboards split from logs. The oldest house of which we know the date of erection was built in 1700 by John Clark and stood until 1880 on the east side of High street, a little south of Mrs. Barney's. It had a leanto roof, the upper story much projecting, and ornamented with conspicuous pendants. Another, the last of this style, but with modern covering, still stands about seventy-five rods further south. Within, a huge chimney with its enormous fire-place and ovens, filled a large part of the lower story, barring all convenient access to the interior of the house by the front door. But this sacred portal was seldom used except for weddings, funerals, and days of solemn thanksgiving. Later on appears the gambrel roof, which was the approved style until the time of the Revolution, and which is even now being revived under the name of the Old Colonial style. The huge chimney was at length divided into two, and moved out of the way of the front door, which now, with its polished brass

knocker, welcomed the approaching guest. An old house was seldom pulled down, but, moved to the rear, it made a kitchen for the newer structure, so that in time the house had as many styles of architecture and dates of erection as an English cathedral.

As we first come in sight of the village, looking down upon it from the Hartford road, we see on the left one of our oldest houses long owned by Seth North, and built by his father Timothy or his grandfather Thomas. Mr. North did not take kindly to Puritan ways and never went to church, and so was universally known as "Sinner North." By the children he was pleased to be addressed in the most deferential manner as "Mr. Sinner." A most excellent authority, writing me about the old-time character of the village, mentioned "its universally genteel ways, where everybody went to church except Sinner North." He was otherwise so much in accordance with modern ideas, that as he drew near his end, he ordered his body to be cremated, the place a lonely spot on the mountain between two rocks, and his friend, Adam Stewart, chief cremator, who was to inherit the house for his kindly services. The civil authority, however, interposed and insisted on giving him what they deemed a Christian burial, but Adam Stewart got the house and it remained in the family many years. Nearly opposite stood in Revolutionary days the tavern of Samuel North, Jr. He, too, found his ways at variance with public opinion, bought, as he states it, his rum, sugar, tea, etc., in violation of the excise laws, in foreign parts, sold them for Continental money which proved worthless, and then was arrested on complaint of Thomas Lewis and Deacon Bull and fined £100, the General Court declining to interfere. A little east of Mr. North's tavern stood the home of the Bird family from whom the hill derived its name. They have all long ago taken their flight to other towns, but our old-

est men can easily remember the old house and the tragic end of Noadiah Bird, one of the last of the family who dwelt there. He was killed by an escaped lunatic on the night of Sunday, May 15, 1825, and the attempt to capture the lunatic resulted in the death of still another citizen. Descending the hill toward the west, we find on the corner where the road, formerly called the road to Simsbury, runs northward, an old house once the home of Josiah North, and soon after his death in 1784, passing into the hands of Capt. Isaac Buck, who there lived and died at an advanced age. But we must not linger on the site of the numerous houses that once looked over the valley from this hill, only at the foot we must stay a moment, though the little red house of Gov. Treadwell, just north of Poke brook and west of the big rock can only be remembered by the oldest of our people. Dr. Porter and Professor Denison Olmsted have both written worthy memorials of this eminent patriot, scholar, and Christian, but any exhaustive account of his public services must be a history of the common school system of Connecticut, of the rise of foreign missions, and of much of the political history of the State in the days of the Revolution.

Crossing the brook and walking on the line of the old road which once ran where the south gate of the premises of Mr. Barney stands, we come upon the house of Mr. Elijah L. Lewis, built for his grandfather Elijah in 1790, the family living while it was building in an old house just west. Going southerly about thirty rods, we find on the corner next south of the North schoolhouse an old gambrel-roofed building with the end towards the street, and, in some far-off time, painted red. In 1752 it was the property of Daniel Curtis, who, twenty years thereafter, sold it to his son Gabriel, who, after another twenty years, found it necessary to pay Capt. Judah Woodruff for new windows and for twenty days' labor in

making the old structure habitable. Gabriel was a tanner and shoemaker, and in 1812 sold out to Frederick Andrus of the same trade, removing to Burlington, Vermont. The old house now became the noisy abode of journey-men shoemakers pounding leather under the direction of Mr. Andrus, thereafter known as Boss Andrus. He died in 1845, and the old house followed the usual dreary fortunes of a tenement house until, in 1882, we find it transformed by the subtle magic of a genial philanthropy, into the home of the Tunxis Library. Entertaining books fill every nook and corner, and antique furniture ranged around the vast old-time fireplace welcome readers young and old to a free and healthful entertainment.

The old house next west, in 1752 the residence of Daniel Curtis, became thereafter the home of his son Solomon until he died in the army in 1776. In 1822, his heirs sold it to Frederick Andrus. The brick blacksmith shop and the white house adjoining were built soon after 1823 by Charles Frost. The land on which the house next west stands was successively owned by the families of Norton, Rew, Judd, North, Smith, Whitmore, and DeWolf. I do not know who built the house. The Elm Tree Inn, where Phinehas Lewis once kept a famous tavern in revolutionary days, was built at various times.

Just across the line on what was once the garden of Col. Gay and of three generations of his descendants, stood the little red shop now removed to the east side of the Waterville road just north of Poke brook. In 1795, Gabriel Curtis pays Capt. Judah Woodruff thirteen shillings for making for it a show window of thirty-two sashes (you can count them to-day if you like) for his son Lewis Curtis. Lewis advertises in the *Connecticut Courant* under date of 1799, "that he still continues to carry on the clock-making business, such as chime clocks that play a number of different tunes and clocks that exhibit the

moon's age," etc., etc. A few steps down the hill westward bring us to the house built by Col. Fisher Gay in 1766 and 1767, as appears by his ledger account with Capt. Woodruff. Col. Gay died early in the war, and some account of his public services can be found in H. P. Johnston's "Yale in the Revolution."

Crossing the Waterville road, we come to the house opposite the Catholic Church, some parts of which are very old, the upper story of the front, however, having been built by the late Capt. Pomeroy Strong, soon after he bought the place in 1802. There was, as early as 1645, one more house to the west, and then came the North Meadow gate.

Returning now to the main street, the highway committee in 1785 sold to Deacon Samuel Richards a strip out of the center of the highway, 26 feet wide, where, in the year following, he built the little shop in which traffic has been carried on successively by himself, Horace and Timothy Cowles, James K. Camp, William Gay, and by his son, the present owner. Crossing the trolley track, we come upon the lot on which Daniel Curtis and his youngest son, Eleazer, had in 1783, as the deed reads, "mutually agreed to build a new house, . . . and have large provision for the same." As they held it until 1794, it is probable that the present edifice was built by them. The next house south, where Mr. Abner Bidwell lived many years, was built by Deacon Samuel Richards in 1792 as he records in his diary.

I have spoken at some length in my last paper of this very worthy man and of his honorable service all through the revolutionary war. He was a Puritan of the Puritans, of the strictest integrity, kindly of heart, precise in manner, and with a countenance grave, not to say solemn, as became a deacon of the olden time. It is related that a small boy once sent to his store, was so overpowered by

the gravity of his demeanor, that instead of asking for a pair of H and L hinges, he demanded of the horrified deacon a pair of archangels. He was the first postmaster of Farmington. On the 22d of July, 1799, he advertises in the *Connecticut Courant* :

“Information. A post-office is established at Farmington for public accommodation. Samuel Richards, D. P. Master.”

The post-office was in the front hall of his house, and the half dozen letters that sometimes accumulated were fastened against the wall by tapes crossing each other in a diamond pattern. Five years later he records in his diary, “Kept the post-office, the proceeds of which were forty dollars, the one-half of which I gave to Horace Cowles for assisting me.” The year after he obtained this lucrative office, instead of recording as heretofore the “continuation of distress in my temporal concerns,” he deplores “my unthankfulness to God for his great goodness to me. He is now trying me by prosperity.”

Immediately to the south stands a house which, before it was modernized by the late Mr. Leonard Winship, I remember as an old red, dilapidated structure, built by I know not whom. During the Revolution it was owned by Nehemiah Street, who, as I told you at the opening of this library, was fined along with many of the young people of the village, because, being assembled at his house, they refused to disperse until after nine o'clock at night. Mr. Street was frequently in similar trouble until disgusted with Puritan ways, he converted his goods into money and sought the freedom of the far West. Poor Nehemiah! He soon found something worse than New England justice. Having invested his money in a drove of cattle, he sold them at Niagara Falls for six hundred pounds and fell in with a certain James Gale of Goshen, N. Y., who during the war commanded a plunder-

ing party on Long Island. This treacherous companion followed him from Niagara, and watching his opportunity while Mr. Street was bending over a spring of water by the roadside, struck him from behind with a tomahawk, and all the troubles of Nehemiah were ended.

The land to the south once belonged to Rev. Samuel Hooker and remained in the family for four generations. Here stands the house where Major Hooker lived and died, and where, under a great elm tree in front, most genial of story-tellers, he was wont to sit of a summer evening and entertain his youthful friends. On this locality lived his father, Roger, and his grandfather, John. The latter was an assistant, a judge of the Superior Court and a man of note in the colony. Deacon Edward Hooker states that John Hooker and the Rev. Samuel Whitman were the only men in town that were saluted with the title of Mr. Others were known as Goodman or Gaffer. Mr. Whitman, the minister, he says, would always wait on the meeting-house steps for Mr. Hooker to come up and enter the house with him on Sabbath morning and share with him the respectful salutation of the people.

Passing over the site where once stood the store of Samuel Smith, we come to the brick building erected in 1791 by Reuben S. Norton for a store, and which has since been used for divers purposes—store, tailor's shop, tenement house, post-office, church, groggery, and now, much enlarged, for a savings bank. Where my house stands, there stood, until I removed it in 1872, the very old house of Solomon Whitman. At the northeast corner was a square addition in which Miss Nancy Whitman presided over the post-office. I remember calling on the way from school and seeing through the small delivery window a huge dining-table covered with methodically-arranged letters and papers, and Miss Nancy, with gold-rimmed spectacles, bending over them. By this little



window, on a high shelf, to be out of reach of mischievous boys, stood a big dinner bell to call the postmistress, when necessary, from regions remote. Sometimes an adventurous youth, by climbing on the back of a comrade, succeeded in getting hold of the bell, but I never knew the same boy to repeat the offense. The next buildings are modern, so let us hurry on past the drug store built somewhere between 1813 and 1818 by Elijah and Gad Cowles, and past the brick schoolhouse of Miss Porter, built by Major Cowles as a hotel to accommodate the vast concourse of travelers about to come to the village by the Farmington canal. Next comes a house built by Capt. Judah Woodruff for Thomas Hart Hooker in 1768, and very soon passing with the mill property into the possession of the Demings. It was said during the days of fugitive slave laws to have been an important station on the underground railroad. It is best known to most of us as the residence of the late Samuel Deming, Esq., for many years a trial justice of the town, who fearlessly executed the law, whether his barns were burned, or whatever happened. We did not suffer from that curse of society, a lax administration of justice. The house next north of the post-office, now owned by Mr. Chauncey Deming, is said by the historian of the "Hart Family" to have belonged to Deacon John Hart, son of Capt. John, and if so, must be about 150 years old. The land was in the Hart family for five generations. Near the site of the post-office stood the house of Sergeant John Hart, son of Deacon Stephen, the immigrant, in which he with his family were burned on the night of Saturday, December 15, 1666, eight persons in all, only one son, afterward known as Capt. John, escaped, he being absent at their farm in Nod, now Avon. From this point southward to the road down to the new cemetery, all the houses were destroyed by the great fire of July 21,

1864, including the long yellow house, just north of the present parsonage, which was the home of Rev. Timothy Pitkin during his sixty years' residence in our village. In my last paper I spoke of him as a patriot in the War of Independence. Of his high character and fervid eloquence as pastor and preacher, we have the testimony of Dr. Porter in his "Half-Century Discourse." Professor Olmsted says of him: "Do you not see him coming in at yonder door, habited in his flowing blue cloak, with his snow-white wig and tri-cornered hat of the olden time? Do you not see him wending his way through the aisle to the pulpit, bowing on either side with the dignity and grace of the old nobility of Connecticut?" Immediately south of the road to the new cemetery stands the brick house built by Dr. Porter in 1808, the year of his marriage. We need not linger in our hasty progress to speak of the manifold virtues of one too well known to us all, and personally to many of us to need any eulogies here. The next house, now the residence of Mr. Rowe, was built by the Rev. Joseph Washburn on a lot purchased by him for that purpose in 1796. This healer of dissensions and much-loved pastor, after a settlement of eleven years, while seeking a mild southern climate in his failing health, died on the voyage on Christmas day, 1805, and was buried at sea. A few years later his house became the home of this library under the care of Deacon Elijah Porter. The large brick house on the top of the hill, with its imposing Roman façade looking southward, was built by Gen. George Cowles. The house on the corner, long the residence of Zenas Cowles, and now owned by Lient.-Commander Cowles of the U. S. Navy, of a style of architecture much superior to all houses of the village of that time and perhaps of any time, is said to have been designed by an officer of Burgoyne's army sent here as a prisoner of war. The house next north of it

was bought by the late Richard Cowles in 1810, and must have been built by its former owner and occupant, Coral Case, or by his father, John Case.

But it is high time that we crossed the street and commenced our return. Nearly opposite the last-mentioned house stood the dwelling of the Rev. Samuel Hooker, second minister of Farmington, of whom I have formerly spoken. On this site, and probably in the same house, lived Roger Newton, his brother-in-law and the first pastor of this church. On the 13th of October, 1652, he stood up with six other Christian men, and they known in New England phraseology as the "Seven Pillars of the Church," seeking no authority from any intermediary church, consociation, bishop, priest, or earthly hierarch, but deriving their powers from the Word of God alone, as they understood it, declared themselves to be the First Church of Christ in Farmington. Probably during the pastorate of Mr. Newton there was no meeting-house. The Fast Day service of December, 1666, we know was held at the house of Sergeant John Hart, two days before the fire, and there is a carefully transmitted tradition, that the services of the Sabbath were held on the west side of the main street a little south of the Meadow Lane, and, therefore, probably at the house owned by Mrs. Sarah Wilson, sister of Rev. Samuel Hooker, where now stands the house of T. H. and L. C. Root. We hear of no meeting-house until 1672, when the record called the New Book begins, the "ould book" having been worn out and lost, and with it all account of the erection of the first house. In September, 1657, Mr. Newton was dismissed from this church and went to Boston to take ship for England. What befel him by the way is narrated by John Hull, mint-master of Boston, he who coined the famous pine-tree shillings. After waiting on shipboard at Nantasket Roads six or eight days for a favorable

wind, the commissioners of the colonies and the Rev. John Norton sent for him, desiring a conference before his departure. The captain of the vessel and his associates, of a race always superstitious, thinking this divine another Jonah and the cause of their detention, hurried him on shore, and, the wind immediately turning fair, sailed on their way without him. He remained in Boston several weeks, preaching for Rev. John Norton on the 17th of October. After this date, we lose sight of him until his settlement in Milford on the 22d of August, 1660.

Crossing the road formerly known as "the highway leading to the old mill place," and a century later as "Hatter's Lane," we come to the house next south of the old cemetery, owned and probably built by John Mix. He was commonly known as Squire Mix, a graduate of Yale, an officer of the Revolution, ten years Judge of Probate, thirty-two years town clerk, and twenty-six years a representative to the General Assembly. He was, as I am told by those who knew him well, tall in stature, dressed as a gentleman of the time, with silver knee-buckles, formal in manner, of quick temper, punctilious, very hospitable, a good neighbor, a member of no church, and bound by no creed, and in politics a federalist. In his latter days, when old age and total blindness shut him out from the busy world, when the political party of his active days had passed away, and new men who hated the names of Washington and Hamilton filled all the old familiar places in the town, the State, and the nation, he is said to have sometimes longed for a judicious use of the thunderbolts of the Almighty. Here, too, for much of his life lived his son Ebenezer Mix, universally known as Captain Eb., who made voyages to China and brought back to the merchant princes of the town, tea, spices, silks, china tea-sets, marked with the names of wealthy purchasers, and all the luxuries of the Orient.

Passing the house adjoining the burying-ground on the north, the home of this library and of Deacon Elijah Porter until his marriage in 1812, we come to the house built by Mr. Asahel Wadsworth, and which was reported unfinished in 1781 when the General Assembly, dissatisfied with its treatment by the inn-keepers of Hartford, proposed to finish their winter session elsewhere, and requested the selectmen of Farmington to report what accommodation could be obtained here. The next house, from which the stage coach goes its daily rounds, was once the residence of Mr. Asa Andrews, and after 1826, of his son-in-law, the late Deacon Simeon Hart. In the brick shop next north, Mr. Andrews made japanned tin ware. He was the maker of those chandeliers, compounds of wood and tin, that long hung from the meeting-house ceiling. Crossing the street formerly known as the Little Back Lane, we come to the house built by Asa Andrews on land bought in 1804, and where Deacon Simeon Hart for many years kept his well-known school. About twenty rods south, on the east side of that street, we come to the gambrel-roofed house built by Hon. Timothy Pitkin, LL.D., on a lot bought by him in 1788. He was a son of the Rev. Timothy Pitkin, a graduate of Yale, a lawyer by profession, five times speaker of the Legislature, a member of Congress from 1806 to 1820, and the author of a "Political and Civil History of the United States," of great value as a book of reference. Next south is the gambrel-roofed house formerly the home of Capt. Selah Porter, and immediately beyond this once stood the house of Deacon Martin Bull and of his father before him.

Returning to the late residence of Deacon Simeon Hart, and crossing the now vacant lot where once flourished the famous inn of Amos Cowles, we reach the house with Ionic columns built by the late Major Timothy

Cowles. Chauncey Jerome, in his "History of the American Clock Business," says, under date of 1815:

"I moved to the town of Farmington . . . and went to work for Capt. Selah Porter for twenty dollars per month. We built a house for Major Timothy Cowles, which was then the best one in Farmington."

The meeting-house next on our way need not detain us. He who would attempt to add to the graphic and exhaustive history by President Porter would be presumptuous indeed. The next house of brick was built by Gad Cowles within the century, and the three-story house of Dr. Wheeler on the corner, by Jonathan Cowles in 1799.

Crossing the road up the mountain, we find on the corner the square house with the pyramidal roof and the chimney in the center owned and occupied by the Rev. Samuel Whitman during his ministry. Parts, if not the whole, of the building are much older than its well-preserved walls would indicate. Tradition says the kitchen was built out of the remains of the old meeting-house, and the Rev. William S. Porter, who knew more about the history of the town than any man who has ever lived or is likely to live, says that the house, probably the front, was built by Cuff Freeman, a colored man of considerable wealth, of course after the death of Mr. Whitman.

Leaving the main street and ascending the hill to the east, we come at the dividing line between the grounds about Miss Porter's schoolhouse and the late residence of Rev. T. K. Fessenden to the site of the house of Col. Noadiah Hooker, known as the "Old Red College" during the days when his son, Deacon Edward, there fitted Southern young men for college. Commander Edward Hooker of the United States Navy sends me a plan of the old house, which he of course well remembers. He says, "the part marked kitchen was floored with smooth, flat mountain stones, and had a big door at the eastern end,

and originally at each end, and my father used to say that when his father was a boy, they used to drive a yoke of oxen with a sled load of wood into one door and up to the big fireplace, then unload the wood upon the fire and drive the team out of the other door." Of the building of the house on the corner eastward, we have the most minute account from the time when in January, 1811, Capt. Luther Seymour drew the plan to the 25th of May, 1812, when Deacon Hooker took possession with his youthful bride. We even know the long list of those who helped raise the frame and of those who came too late for the raising but in time for the refreshments.

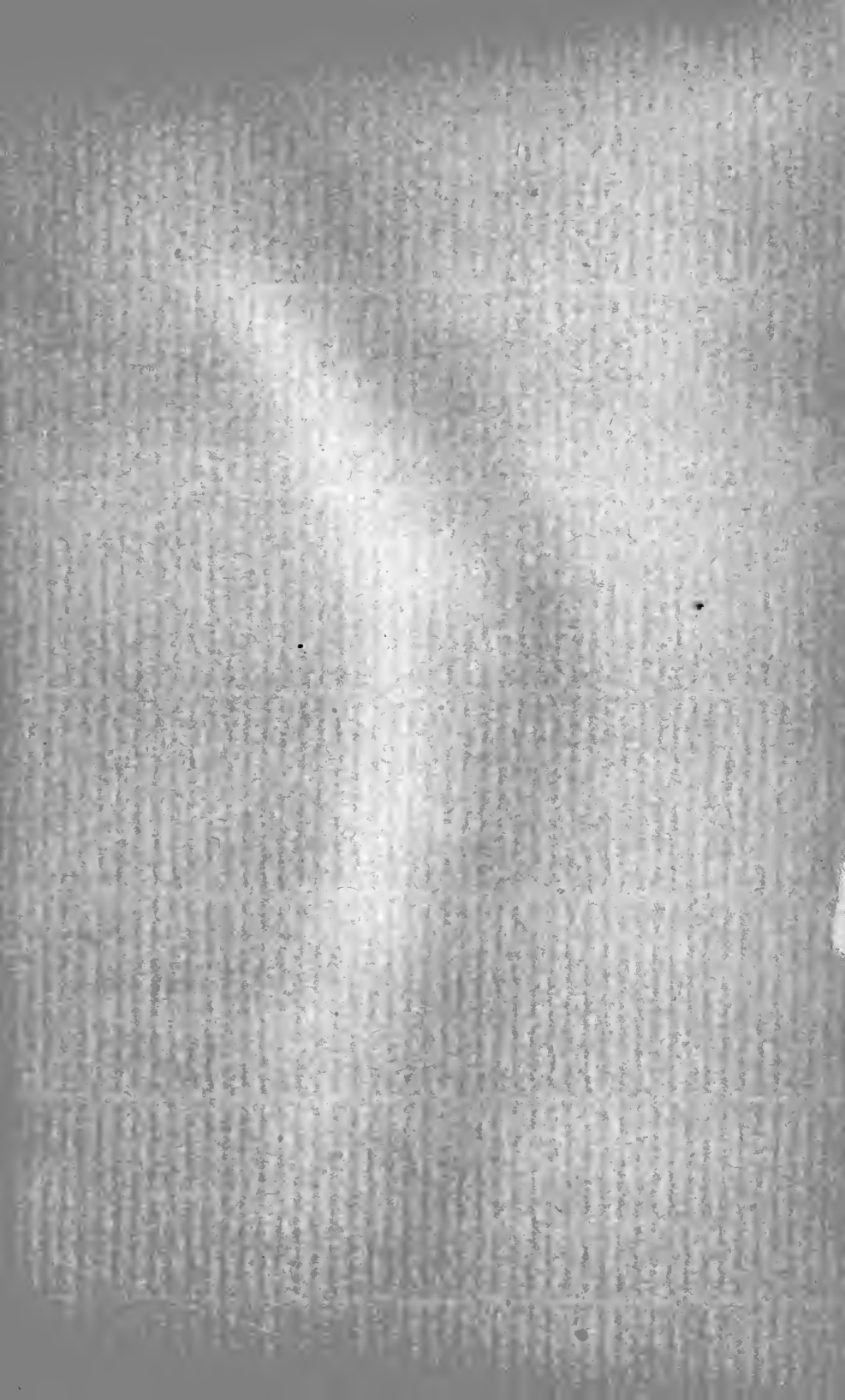
But we must hurry back to the main street, lest with the rich materials at hand for an account of this most interesting man, we detain you beyond all proper bounds. The next old house to the north, the home of Col. Martin Cowles, was built and occupied by John Porter in 1784. Opposite the Savings Bank, the south part of the long house once the residence of Reuben S. Norton, merchant, was built by his grandfather, Thomas Smith, Sen., and the north third, by Deacon Thomas Smith, son of the latter. The next house, long the residence of Horace Cowles, Esq., was built by Samuel Smith, brother of the Deacon, in 1769, and is a good specimen of the style of houses erected by Capt. Judah Woodruff. The next old house, with the high brick basement, was built about 1797 by Capt. Luther Seymour, cabinet-maker and house-builder. Many choice pieces of old furniture in town, much prized by relic-hunters, were the work of his hand, but a large part of his work, thickly studded with brass nail heads, as was the fashion of the time, has been forever hidden from sight under the sods of the old burying-ground. Capt. Seymour was also librarian of one of the several libraries which divided the literary patronage of the village. The next house on a slight elevation stands

on a lot bought in 1769 by John Thomson, third in descent of that name, conspicuous about town with his leathern jacket and his pronounced opinions on Continental paper money. Here lived three generations of his descendants. Passing the house owned by Dr. Thomson, and before him by Mr. James K. Camp, and two other buildings, we come to a house built or largely renewed in 1808 by Nathaniel Olmsted, goldsmith and clockmaker. Here for twenty years were made the tall clocks bearing his name, which still correctly measure time with their solemn beat. He removed to New Haven to be near his brother, Professor Denison Olmsted, and there died in 1860, most genial and loveable of men. His funeral discourse was from the words, "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile." We will halt under the big elm tree, which overhangs the little house where Manin Curtis spent his life, long enough to say that his father, Sylvanus Curtis, in company with Phinehas Lewis in 1762, the year when Sylvanus was married, brought home from a swamp three elm trees. One was planted back of the Elm Tree Inn, one in front of the house of Mr. Curtis, and the third failed to live. The big elm tree is, therefore, 133 years old. On the corner eastward stands the house, much improved of late, built in 1786 and 1787 by Capt. Judah Woodruff for Major Peter Curtiss, an officer in the Revolutionary War, who removed to Granby in 1790, and was the first keeper of the reconstructed Newgate prison, leaving it in 1796 in declining health, and dying in 1797. Omitting the other houses on the west side of High street, for want of time and information, we come to the house lately owned by Selah Westcott, built by Major Samuel Dickinson on a lot bought by him in 1813. Major Dickinson was a house-builder, and when the Farmington canal was opened, he commanded the first packet boat which sailed southward from our wharves on the 10th of



November, 1828, on which a six-year-old boy, afterward a gallant U. S. naval officer in the late war, made his first voyage, sailing as far south as the old South Basin. He writes me: "Long live the memory of the old 'James Hill-house,' and her jolly Captain Dickinson, who was not only a royal canal boat captain, but a famous builder, whose work still stands before you in the 'Old Red Bridge,' one of the best and most substantially built bridges of Connecticut." On the northeast corner of the intersection of High street with the road to New Britain, long stood the house of Capt. Joseph Porter, one of the three houses on the east side of High street, with much projecting upper stories and conspicuous pendants, built about 1700. This was moved some rods up the hill when Mr. Franklin Woodford built his new house, and was burned on the evening of January 15, 1886. So there remains but one of the three houses, the one bought by Rev. Samuel Whitman for his son, Elnathan, in 1735, and is the same house sold by John Stanley, Sen., to Capt. Ebenezer Steel in 1720. Descending to the low ground on the north and rising again, we come to the gambrel-roofed house where lived Dr. Eli Todd from 1798 until his removal to Hartford in 1819. Of this eminent man you will find appreciative notices in the two addresses of President Porter and in the article on the Connecticut Retreat for the Insane by Dr. Stearns in the Memorial History of Hartford County. He will probably be longest remembered as the first superintendent of the Connecticut Retreat for the Insane in Hartford, where his system of minimum restraint and kind treatment opened a new era for suffering humanity. At the northern end of High street, facing the road to the river, we make our last stop at the house of Mrs. Barney, built by Capt. Judah Woodruff about 1805 for Phinehas Lewis. Between this house and the place from which we set out, there stands no house, old or

new, to detain us longer. Thanking you for the patience with which you have endured our long walk through the village streets, I am reminded that it is time we parted company with the old worthies whom we have called up before us for the entertainment of an idle hour, remembering that in times gone by they were wont to hale before his Excellency the Governor such as, having assembled themselves together, refused to disperse until after nine of the clock.





FARMINGTON SOLDIERS  
IN THE COLONIAL WARS

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AN  
HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

Annual Meeting

OF

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY

OF

FARMINGTON, CONN.

*September 8, 1897*

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*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of Farmington :*

I propose this evening to give some account of Farmington soldiers in the wars preceding the Revolution, while the colony was still under the crown. In so doing I shall consider the men of this village only, leaving out of sight the vastly more numerous residents of the ancient town, which once extended from Simsbury on the north to Cheshire on the south, and from Wethersfield westward to what is now the town of Plymouth.

The first serious conflict in which the settlers of Connecticut were engaged was the Pequot War. This occurred before our village had any existence, but several of the men who afterward settled Farmington, and who here lived and died, were in the fight. That we may realize the necessity and the justifiableness of the war, let us briefly recall the situation. In the river towns of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield were only about 250 adult men, and in the fort at Saybrook twenty more, under the command of Lion Gardiner. In the southeastern corner of the colony was the powerful tribe of the Pequots, under their sachem, Sassacus; further east the Narragansetts, under Miantonimo; and to the north the Mohegans, under the friendly Uncas; while to the west were the dreaded Mohawks. An attempt by the Pequots to unite all the tribes and wipe out the whites at one blow failed. The Narragansetts hated the Pequots more fiercely than they did the Englishmen, and Uncas was always the friend of the whites.

In 1633 two traders of Virginia, Stone and Norton, with six other men, were murdered in their vessel as they were sailing up the river to the Dutch fort at Hartford. Three years later occurred the murder of John Oldham at Block Island, and the ill-advised attempt of Endicott from the Bay Colony to chastise without destroying the offenders called out the indignant protest of Gardiner: "You come hither to raise these wasps about my ears, and then you take wing and flee away." After the killing and torture of numerous men at Saybrook, and the roasting alive of a Wethersfield man, the savages proceeded to the latter place, killed seven men, a woman, and child, and carried away two girls. This was bringing the war too near home, and so, in May, 1637, the General Court at Hartford "ordered that there shall be an offensive war against the Pequot." A levy of ninety men was ordered, to be under the command of Capt. John Mason, who had learned the art of war with Fairfax in the Netherlands. For the captain, the minister, and the sick were to be provided one hogshead of good beer, three or four gallons of strong water, and two gallons of sack, and for the army a vast supply of stores. On the 10th of May, 1637, the expedition sailed down the river in three vessels, with their friend Uncas and seventy of his men. The graphic account of the expedition written by Capt. Mason is quite as entertaining as any commentary of Cæsar, but we have time only to recall what every school boy has read — the burning of the Pequot fort and the destruction of their power. Mason says: "Thus in little more than one hour's space was this impregnable fort, with themselves, utterly destroyed, to the number of six or seven hundred." Whatever we may think of this style of warfare, the Indians surely had no right to complain of any barbarity. No half-way measures were possible. One nation or the other must

be exterminated. The valiant Capt. Mason closed his account with the pious exhortation: "Let us, therefore, praise the Lord for His goodness and His wonderful works to the children of men." And then, by way of postscript, says: "I shall add a word or two by way of comment. . . . Our commons were very short. . . . We had but one pint of strong liquors among us in our whole march. . . . (the bottle of liquor being in my hand), and when it was empty, the very smelling to the bottle would presently recover such as fainted away, which happened by the extremity of the heat. . . . I shall mention two or three special providences that God was pleased to vouchsafe to particular men. . . . John Dier and Thomas Steel were both of them shot in the knots of their handkerchiefs, being about their necks, and received no hurt. Lieutenant Seely was shot in the eyebrow with a flat-headed arrow, the point turning downward; I pulled it out myself. Lieutenant Bull [ancestor of our Deacon Bull] had an arrow shot into a hard piece of cheese, having no other defense; which may verify the old saying, 'A little armor would serve if a man knew where to place it.'" On their return the soldiers from Hartford were granted a lot known as the Soldier's Field, and it is largely from the record of this land that we learn the names of the soldiers in the fight. One of those who soon helped settle Farmington was Thomas Barnes, whose house stood on the east side of the main street on land now occupied by the old burying-ground, or possibly just south of it. Another Pequot soldier was John Bronson, whose house stood near what is sometimes called Diamond Glen Brook, having the mountain to the south, and highways on all other sides. A third was Deacon Stephen Hart, a man of note in all public matters, whether pertaining to the town or the church. His house was on the west side of the main street, opposite

the meeting-house. The fourth, and, so far as I know, the only remaining soldier, was John Warner, who lived in a house nearly opposite the savings bank, which he sold about 1665 to Matthew Woodruff, and bought another of Reinold Marvin on the west side of the main street, near the house of T. H. and L. C. Root. To Thomas Barnes and John Warner each, the General Court in October, 1671, granted fifty acres of land for their services as Pequot soldiers.

The Pequot war ended, the settlers were able to cultivate in security the rich lands bought by them of Sequasson, the sachem of the Indians of Hartford and vicinity. In 1650 they obtained a new deed from the Indians of Tunxis Sepus with new agreements "to settle peace in a way of truth and righteousness betwixt the English and them." For fourteen years they lived in much peace and contentment undisturbed by the distant wars of savage tribes. At length the Commissioners of the United Colonies resolved to assist the Long Island Indians in a war against the Narragansetts. Twenty men were to go from Connecticut, of whom Farmington was to send one man. The expedition was under the command of Major Willard of Massachusetts, who found the Indians had deserted their village and taken refuge in a swamp fifteen miles away. Leaving them unmolested, he marched home again and disbanded his forces. The next General Court at Hartford voted the soldiers sixpence a day for their valuable services, and thus ended the Narragansett war. Who the one soldier was from Farmington does not appear.

Leaving unconsidered the constant warfare of hostile tribes and the complex diplomacy by which the colonies sought to keep the peace, we must confine ourselves to what especially concerns our village. On the 9th of April, 1657, the General Court takes cognizance of "a

most horrid murder committed by some Indians at Farmington." Fourteen days afterward John Hull of Boston records in his diary: "We also heard, that at a town called Farmington, near Hartford, an Indian was so bold as to kill an English woman great with child, and likewise her maid, and also sorely wounded a little child — all within their house,— and then fired the house, which also fired some other barns or houses. The Indians, being apprehended, delivered up the murderer, who was brought to Hartford, and (after he had his right hand cut off) was with an axe knocked on the head by the executioner. The Lord teach us what such sad providences speak unto us all!" I speak more particularly of this occurrence because careless writers persist in confounding this affair with the burning of the house of Sergeant John Hart in 1666, with which the Indians had nothing whatever to do.

The situation was becoming so serious that the commissioners in September forbade Indians traveling armed from village to village. Here is an examination, by the magistrates, of a body of Deerfield Indians who came through Farmington in a threatening manner on April 28th of the following year. The combined shrewdness and insolence of the Indian replies are interesting.

- Q. Whence come you?
- A. We are Pocumtocoos.
- Q. Why come you so many of you armed with guns?
- A. Why may one not carry guns as well as the Mohegans or other Indians. And why do you carry arms?
- Q. What did you do at Hockanum?
- A. We were on our way.
- Q. What did you do at the English houses?
- A. Nothing.
- Q. We asked whether they were at Robert [illegible]

house yesterday and whether they did not take away a basket of corn and a pewter bottle.

A. They returned and asked us whether we came to look after an old Indian basket, and thereupon heaved unto us an old Indian basket and a bunch of flax. This they did with laughter and derision.

Q. We asked whither they were going.

A. They told us that we are here. The chief of this company was one Wonoepukum to whom we directed our speech and desired them that they would give us a reason why they came through the English plantations in such manner contrary to the law made by the commissioners last September Anno 1657. Unto this they made us no return.

No more serious disturbances with the Indians occurred until in 1675, Philip's War called a new generation of soldiers to the field. Massasoit, sachem of the Pokanokets, was dead. His oldest son, Wamsutta, did not long survive him, and Metacomet, his second son, known as Philip, became chief sachem of the tribe. You have all read of this savage hero, whose proud nature could not endure the arrogance of the Plymouth people, and who for two years devastated the country with fire and slaughter. The war, beginning in June, 1675, at Swansea, spread northward through Massachusetts, destroying the towns on the Connecticut River, and came as near to us as Simsbury, which was burned on the 26th of March, 1676. On the 6th of August, two days after the attack on Brookfield, Massachusetts, the Council at Hartford ordered one hundred dragoons raised, fifteen from Farmington. Again, September 2d, Farmington was ordered to furnish seven of the 100 soldiers who marched under Major Treat and rescued the survivors of the Bloody Brook fight at Deerfield on the 18th. Again, November 25th, the Council ordered fifteen soldiers from Farming-

ton which were probably in the great Narragansett Swamp Fight of December 19th. On the 4th of January following seven more were called for, and on the 21st of February ten more. Driven from Rhode Island, the savages assaulted the Massachusetts towns, Lancaster, Medford, Northampton, Rehoboth, and Sudbury, and on March 26th burned Simsbury in this colony. On May 1st Sergeant Anthony Howkins of this town was ordered to raise as many volunteers as possible. Twenty days later, "upon the intelligence of the last engagement up the river," five more were ordered from this village. The engagement referred to was the famous "Falls Fight" on the morning of May 19th at Turner's Falls above Greenfield, where Jobanna Smith of this town was killed and Roger Orvis wounded. Philip now returned to his old haunts at Pokanoket, and finally, with a few remaining followers, was driven into a swamp and killed. The General Court ordered the first day of November, 1676, to be solemnly kept a day of public thanksgiving, and Rev. Samuel Hooker of the Farmington church, preaching the next election sermon, lamented "how many villages are already forsaken of their inhabitants, their highways unoccupied, how many chosen young men are fallen upon the high places of the field, how many widows left solitary among us, with tears on their cheeks, how many mothers in Israel weeping for their children, and refuse to be comforted because they are not."

Peace having returned, the town granted land called "soldier lots" to those who fought in the war, and from the record of these we learn the names of some of the soldiers. Care, however, must be used not to confound the names of the subsequent purchasers with those of the soldiers, the original record having been worn out and lost, and only a portion of the grants having been transcribed into the "new book," so called, which opens with

the year 1682. I will give a brief account of twenty soldiers, being all I can positively identify.

Joseph Andrews, son of John, was born in 1651, and removed, after the war, to that part of Wethersfield now known as Newington, where he died in 1706. Benjamin Barnes, son of Thomas, the Pequot soldier, was born in 1653, and removed to Waterbury, where he became a townsman — that is, selectman, and a grave-digger. There he died in 1712. Joseph Barnes, brother of Benjamin, was born in 1655, married Abigail Gibbs, and died in 1741. His house was next south of the old burying-ground. Samuel Gridley was a constable, and for five years a selectman. His house was on the west side of the main street, on or near the site of the house of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq. Anthony Howkins was one of the patentees named in the charter of Charles II, and an assistant in the years 1666 to 1673, inclusive. He was ordered to raise a company of soldiers at Farmington, and march them to Hadley in May, 1676. His house was on the east side of the road to Hartford, nearly opposite where the North schoolhouse now stands. John Judd, son of Deacon Thomas, was a son-in-law of Anthony Howkins, was a deputy to the General Court many times, and held the offices of ensign and lieutenant. His house was on the west side of the main street, where Major Hooker afterward lived, and after him the late Deacon William Gay. Samuel Judd, brother of the last-named soldier, married after the war, and removed to Northampton, where he lived and died. William Lewis was the son of Capt. William Lewis, and grandson of William the immigrant. He was selectman in 1696 and 1713. He owned several houses, one of which was fortified by the town — very likely the one on the site of the Elm Tree Inn. John and Thomas Newell, sons of Thomas the immigrant, were born in a house which stood on or near the



site of that of Mrs. Dr. Brown, opposite the Catholic Church. They removed to Waterbury. James and Nathaniel North, sons of John the immigrant, who lived near where now stands the house of the late Dr. Asahel Thomson, were born in Farmington in 1647 and 1656, respectively, and removed from the town soon after the war. Roger Orvis, son of George the immigrant, was in the party which marched from Hadley for the relief of Hatfield, May 20, 1676, and was wounded. His house was at "ye southerly end of the town plat," near where the late James W. Cowles lived. Dr. Daniel Porter was a son of the first Dr. Daniel, who lived on the west side of the main street, not far from the South schoolhouse, and who was paid a salary of twelve pounds by the General Court for setting all the broken bones in the colony, and was allowed six shillings extra for traveling expenses for each journey to the river towns. Dr. Daniel, the younger, who assumed the practice of surgery on the death of his father, removed to Waterbury, and was the second of five generations of Drs. Daniel Porter—father, son, grandson, great-grandson, and nephew of great-grandson. His medical library consisted of "a bone set book," appraised at two shillings. Thomas Porter, son of the first Robert, was the great-grandfather of Dr. Noah Porter. Jobanna Smith was born at Wethersfield before his father removed to this town, in or about the year 1656. He was killed May 30, 1676, in the expedition for the relief of Hatfield. His soldier lot was laid out to his heirs, "a top of ye mountain against Rocke Chayr." This singular rock formation, or what is left of it, stands on the north side of the road to Hartford, a little west of the stone crusher. With an attempt to emphasize the unusual, it was long known as the Devil's Rocking Chair. Deacon John Stanley received a grant of a soldier lot from the town, and was pretty certainly a soldier in King Philip's

War, rather than his father, Captain John, to whom has sometimes been ascribed that honor. He removed to Waterbury, but subsequently returned to Farmington. Much interesting information about him can be found in the recent history of Waterbury. Timothy Stanly, brother of John, also removed to Waterbury, and was a prominent man. John Woodruff, son of the first Matthew, filled a number of town offices — townsman, fence-viewer, chimney-viewer, etc. Simon Wrotham, the last on the list, was known as Mr., but I have been unable to learn the source of a title then accorded only to ministers and men high in official position. He was certainly conspicuous in the church, which excommunicated him. Before a council he fared no better, whereupon he appealed to the General Court to cite both the church and council before them, which body declined "to give the church or council any trouble to appear before them . . . but advised said Wrothum to a serious consideration of his former ways." His house stood near the site of the residence of Mr. H. H. Mason.

In addition to these, six Farmington friendly Indians went up to Springfield on the 6th of October, 1675. Trusting you will excuse any error in my pronunciation of Algonquin which you may detect, I give you the names of the warriors as recorded. Nesehegan, Wanawmesse, Woewassa, Sepoose, Uekchepassun, and Unckeo-wott.

But we must hurry on. There is still much fighting before us. With the death of Philip the scene of strife was removed to the Province of Maine, and Connecticut had rest until England, on the accession of William and Mary, declared war with France in May, 1689. Then began a new series of fiendish massacres, planned no longer by the savage Philip, but by the polite French rulers of Quebec, and continued until the Peace of Rys-

wick in September, 1697. Connecticut repeatedly sent soldiers to Albany, a force under Winthrop in the expedition of Sir William Phipps against Montreal in 1690, and in 1695 to the river towns of Massachusetts. The peace was of short duration. After a rest of five years Queen Anne declared war against France and Spain, and the savages, led by French generals, recommenced their midnight massacres. In 1704, seven houses in Farmington were ordered fortified, viz., those of Thomas Orton, William Lewis, Howkins Hart, James Wadsworth, John Hart, John Wadsworth, and Samuel Wadsworth. In the expedition against Quebec under Nicholson in 1709, which failed for want of the promised assistance of English ships, Farmington furnished eleven men. How many of the 300 Connecticut soldiers who went under Col. Whiting in the successful Port Royal Expedition of 1710, is not recorded, or of the 360 who marched under Whiting the next year against Quebec and failed, owing to the utter incompetency of the English Admiral Walker. The peace of Utrecht was signed March, 1713, and the colony had rest. The only Farmington soldier in the Canada Expedition of 1711, whose name I find recorded, was John Scott. Capt. John Hart marched a company in February, 1712, into the county of Hampshire, Massachusetts, but the names of his soldiers have not been preserved on any known record. From the peace of Utrecht in 1713, to the declaration of war against Spain in 1739, the colony had peace broken only by fears of invasion from Canada, which did not take place, but which kept the colony in constant alarm. On the destruction of Rutland, Vermont, in 1723, a company of 200 men was formed from the trainbands of Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield to hold themselves in readiness. Hunting parties of friendly Indians were forbidden north of the roads from Farmington to Waterbury

and from Farmington to Hartford, and scouting parties of whites were ordered to range the woods continuously north of Simsbury. In May, 1724, thirty-two men, of whom ten were from Farmington, were ordered for the defense of Litchfield against a party of hostile Indians discovered lurking about that town. One of the ten was Matthew Woodruff, the fourth in direct descent of that name, who, in his memorial to the General Assembly in May, 1725, says: "Your memorialist in the summer last past at Litchfield, being a soldier there, killed an Indian (one of the common enemy) by the help of God." The Assembly voted him thirty pounds, whereupon one Nathaniel Watson of Windsor, encouraged by his success, represented to the Assembly that he too made a shot at an Indian at the same time as Mr. Woodruff, and thought he hit him, but the General Assembly thought otherwise. The following year the New Milford Indians held dances in war-paint and barbarously murdered a child, whereupon the Governor and Council ordered all painted Indians to be treated as enemies. John Hooker, William Wadsworth, and Isaac Cowles, or any two of them, were ordered to "inspect the Indians of Farmington . . . every day about sunset" who were required to give "an account of their rambles and business the preceding day." Submission to such an infringement of their personal liberty, shows the peaceful character of the Tunxis Indians. In October following they were allowed their former liberty, provided they abstained from war-paint and wore a white cloth on their heads while in the woods. The danger was soon over, and no Connecticut town suffered actual violence.

In October 23, 1739, England declared war against Spain, and Connecticut was called upon for two companies of 100 men each which sailed in September of the following year under Captains Roger Newberry and John

Silliman to join the disastrous expedition of Admiral Vernon against Carthagera. Of the 1,000 men from New England, scarcely 100 returned. What was the quota of Farmington does not appear or the names of the men. The folly and rashness of Vernon, bringing sorrow to a thousand homes, did not prevent the poet Thomson from singing his praises or Lawrence Washington from naming Mount Vernon in his honor. Five years of comparative quiet pass. On the 4th of March, 1745, France declares war and once more lets loose her savage allies upon the English frontiers. Her stronghold was the fortress of Louisbourg on the island of Cape Breton, and no lasting peace seemed possible until Canada, and, first of all, this fortress, was wrested from her. An expedition of New England troops, under the direction of Gov. Shirley of Massachusetts, defended from molestation seaward by British men of war, was sent for its reduction and captured it June 17th, a day subsequently memorable as the anniversary of the battle of Bunker Hill. Connecticut sent 500 men besides 100 in the colony's sloop, *Defence*, and 200 more during the siege. Of the company from this vicinity Timothy Root of Farmington was lieutenant, and died at Cape Breton in April after the surrender. He was the great-great-grandfather of T. H. and L. C. Root. I know of no list of the soldiers of his company. Dr. Samuel Richards, who practiced as a physician in numerous towns in this vicinity and died in Plainville, learned the rudiments of his professional knowledge in the hospital established for the New England troops. Another soldier in this campaign, as appears from his memorial to the General Court, was Ebenezer Smith, son of Jonathan, who lived on the south side of the road to Hartford, near where Mr. Martin O'Meara now lives. He removed to New Britain, and his gravestone describes him as late of Farmington. Ebenezer Lee and Gershom

Orvis, in the company of Adonijah Fitch, were probably identical with Farmington men of that name. In May, 1746, twenty men were ordered as scouts to the county of Hampshire, Massachusetts, and forty more for a similar service "between the enemy's borders and the borders of the British plantation." By request of his Majesty's government a new expedition against Canada was organized. In May the General Court ordered 600 men raised, and in June increased the number to 1,000, but the ships for their support were sent elsewhere and the colonies given over to destruction by the formidable French fleet under d'Anville, which proposed to wipe out every vestige of Englishmen and their hated religion from the western continent. Pestilence and the war of the elements came to their relief, and the New England divines thanked the Almighty for a repetition of the story of Sennacherib the Assyrian. The war ended with the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, April 30, 1748.

For seven years the colony had a respite from war, but in 1754, without any declaration of war, the French began to extend their line of forts around the English settlements, which led to four expeditions to break their line in 1755. One against the Ohio, resulting in Braddock's defeat and Washington's first lesson in war; one against Nova Scotia, familiar to the readers of Longfellow's *Evangeline*; one against Niagara, and one against Crown Point. For the latter service Connecticut raised 1,500 men in four companies of 750 men each, who participated in the bloody but indecisive battle of September 6th at Lake George. As a result of the Nova Scotia expedition, some of the Acadians were sent to Connecticut, and more, to the number of 400, being expected, the General Court ordered fourteen sent to Farmington as its proper proportion. So ended the year 1755. Of Farmington soldiers, we can identify Ezekiel Lewis, sergeant ;

Ebenezer Orvis, ensign; and privates Bela Lewis, Samuel Bird, and Noah Porter, father of the late Dr. Noah Porter and grandfather of President Porter. Deacon Noah Porter, who served in this expedition, lived in his boyhood in the house of his father Robert which stood where now stands the brick house built by the late Francis W. Cowles, next north of Miss Adgate's pharmacy. The house was given him by his father on his marriage in 1764, and was occupied by him until about 1781, when, after the birth of Dr. Porter, he removed to what is now the town farm on the road to Avon. This he sold in 1809 and returned to village life at the house of his son, then the pastor of the church of which the father had been for thirty-four years a deacon.

For the campaign of 1756 against Crown Point the Connecticut Colony ordered 2,500 men raised and formed into four regiments, and in October, in response to the urgent call of the Earl of Loudon for reinforcements, eight additional companies of 100 men each were ordered raised out of the town train-bands, Josiah Lee of Farmington to be captain of one of the companies. They were no sooner raised than Loudon concluded to go into winter quarters three months before the usual time and do nothing. The troops were accordingly dismissed, and so ended the inglorious campaign of 1756. In this campaign were Ezekiel Lewis, lieutenant, Ebenezer Orvis, second lieutenant, Samuel Gridley and David Andrus, sergeants, and Samuel Bird, Abraham Hills, and Bela Lewis, privates. Dr. Elisha Lord, then of this village, was in March, 1756, appointed physician and surgeon for this expedition. On the 2d of October Dr. Timothy Collins of Litchfield, the chief surgeon, returned home sick, and Dr. Lord took his place. He soon afterward removed to Norwich.

In the campaign of 1757 Connecticut raised 1,400 men

to act under the Earl of Loudon. There followed the surrender of Fort William Henry at the southern end of Lake George to the French general, Montcalm, and the butchery of the garrison by the Indians in violation of the terms of the surrender, and this was all the result of great preparations, vast expense, and brilliant hopes. The Farmington soldiers were Ezekiel Lewis, ensign, privates Samuel Bird, Sylvanus Curtis, Gershom Orvis, and Bethuel Norton. Immediately upon the capture of Fort William Henry, the colony was called on in hot haste for reinforcements, and sent about 5,000 men. They were no sooner on their way than orders came from General Webb for their return. This campaign was known as the Alarm of 1757. The soldiers from this village were in service sixteen days, and were Captain William Wadsworth, sergeant Judah Woodruff, clerk James Wadsworth, corporal Hezekiah Wadsworth, and privates Amos Cowles, Phinehas Cowles, Rezin Gridley, Elisha Hart, Noadiah Hooker, John Judd, Elihu Newell, Joseph Root, Timothy Woodruff, Solomon Woodruff, and an Indian, Elijah Wimpey. Probably there were others.

England, now thoroughly tired of its incompetent generals and ministers, compelled King George to accept the administration of William Pitt, the great commoner, as the only man to save the country from ruin. Pitt recalled the weak Loudon and sent over Generals Wolf and Amherst, and Admiral Boscawen, and a new era began. In response to an appeal by Pitt stating that his majesty has "nothing more at heart than to repair the losses and disappointments of the last inactive and unhappy campaign, and, by the blessing of God on his arms, the damages impending on North America," the General Assembly raised five thousand men for the campaign of 1758. The capture of Louisburg, the strongest fortress



of the French, followed by that of Fort Frontenac on the north bank of the St. Lawrence where it flows out of Lake Ontario, and of Fort Duquesne where now stands the city of Pittsburg, revived the spirits of the nation. The loss of Lord Howe in the march against Fort Ticonderoga and the subsequent ill-advised attack on that fort by Bradstreet, alone marred the success of the campaign. The Farmington soldiers, so far as known, were Judah Woodruff, lieutenant, Samuel Bird and Eleazer Curtis, sergeants, and Ashbel Norton, David Orvis, Daniel Owen, and Bela Lewis, privates, and probably Matthew Norton and Thomas Norton.

For the memorable campaign of 1759 Connecticut raised 3,600 men. The capture of Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Niagara, and finally of Quebec itself followed, with the glorious victory of Wolf over Montcalm on the Plains of Abraham. We know very few of the soldiers who took part in this series of victories. The imperfect muster rolls here fail us altogether. We know that Judah Woodruff was first and Samuel Gridley was second lieutenant during the years 1759 and 1760, and that is about all. The journal of a single private soldier has been preserved,—a boyish, illiterate performance, it nevertheless gives us quite as vivid a picture of what happened around him as do the more formal accounts of his superiors. It was written by Reuben Smith, son of Thomas and Mary Smith, well-known citizens of our village, who owned and lived in the south two-thirds of the long house opposite the savings bank. I will give you the greater part of the journal.

“April the 18, 1759. We marched from Farmington. The 20th we entered Greenbush. The next day we sailed over the river and encamped on the hill. May 29, 1759. We marched from Albany to Schenectady, and the same day Horres [Horace?] was shot at Albany before we marched. We set out very late and got

there before night, and pitched our tents and lay very well. As I have thought it proper to write all that is strange, now this thing it seems more strange than anything that I have seen since I came from home. June the 3d day in Schenectady there were two old women got one of the old Leather Hats drunk, and took him to the guard house and put him under guard. . . . God save the King and all the Leather Hat men. June the 6th. There was a woman riding the road from Schenectady to Sir William Johnson's. There came a number of Indians and pulled her off her horse and scalped her, but left her alive. Oh ! it grieves me to take my pen to write these ways of an Indian. This poor woman had a child about one year and a half old, which she begged that she might embrace it once more with a kiss before they killed it. But these cruel, barbarous, cruel creatures . . . stripped her and left her in her blood, and they killed her poor child or carried it into captivity, and another lad that was with them. This woman was brought into Schenectady, and she lived about two days and died. I saw her buried myself, Reuben Smith. June the 12th day, 1759. One of Major Rogers' captains, Captain Redfield, caught three Frenchmen and brought two of them into Schenectady, and from there to Albany. The other they carried to Sir William Johnson's. I saw these captives myself. Reuben Smith. Schenectady. June 20. Died William Ellsworth of Harrington [Harwinton?] in a fit. Belonged to Capt. Paterson's Co., the first that died after we left home. June the 24, 1759. Died Samuel Wright, son to Emersine [Emerson?] Wright of New Britain. He died at Schenectady with sickness in the barracks. He was about 18 years of age. July the 1st, 1759. I was pleased to take a walk to the Dutch Church, and all that I learnt was the 148th Psalm, which they sang. I understood the psalm which the clerk mentioned, and that was all. July 4, 1759. Returned one Stevens who had been in captivity the space of one year. He belonged to Canterbury. He was sold to an Indian squaw. She told him that she would return him to his own land in a few days, but kept him almost one year, and he ran away, and his first post was Swago [Oswego ?], and from thence to Fort Stanwix, and there came a guard from thence with a French lieutenant. They carried him from Schenectady to Albany blindfolded. July 20, 1759. Died Samuel Woodford of Farmington at Schenectady. July 10, 1759. I set out a batteauxing for my pleasure. I went to

the Little Carrying Place and returned the 19th to Schenectady again. . . . 2 of August I had news that Niagara was ours at the loss of [illegible] notwithstanding. Kept a day of rejoicing and eating and drinking. Came night we built a large fire almost extended to the clouds, and shot our guns briskly. August the 10. Came an old bush-headed man crying good limes, good limes, good limes, with such open throat and horrid mouth that some took him to be the devil. . . . October the 14th. I am sorry to think that I have omitted writing so long. Now one thing prompts me to write. There were two men killed by Negroes in a garden. November the 7th, 1759. Died Capt. Daniel Owen of Farmington, belonging to Major John Patterson's company."

The subsequent year our journalist came again to Schenectady, but died on the 26th of May.

To strengthen and defend the places captured, and for the reduction of Montreal, Connecticut raised 5,000 men in 1760, and 2,300 more during each of the years 1761 and 1762. Martinique was captured in February, 1762, and Havana in the succeeding August. From the latter expedition scarcely a man returned. From the memorial of his widow to the General Assembly, it appears that Lieut. David Andrus, who lived where the East Farms district schoolhouse now stands, was taken sick before the embarkation of the troops on their return from Havana, and died about eight days after his arrival in New York.

The treaty of Paris, February 10, 1763, ended the war. With the exception of 265 men sent in 1764 to put down the Indian uprising at Detroit, the colony was not called upon for more soldiers until the War of the Revolution.

Such is the account of the soldiers of this village, so far as I have been able to gather it from contemporaneous records. A much more entertaining narrative might have been constructed from family traditions, which sometimes contain a grain of truth, but not always. The

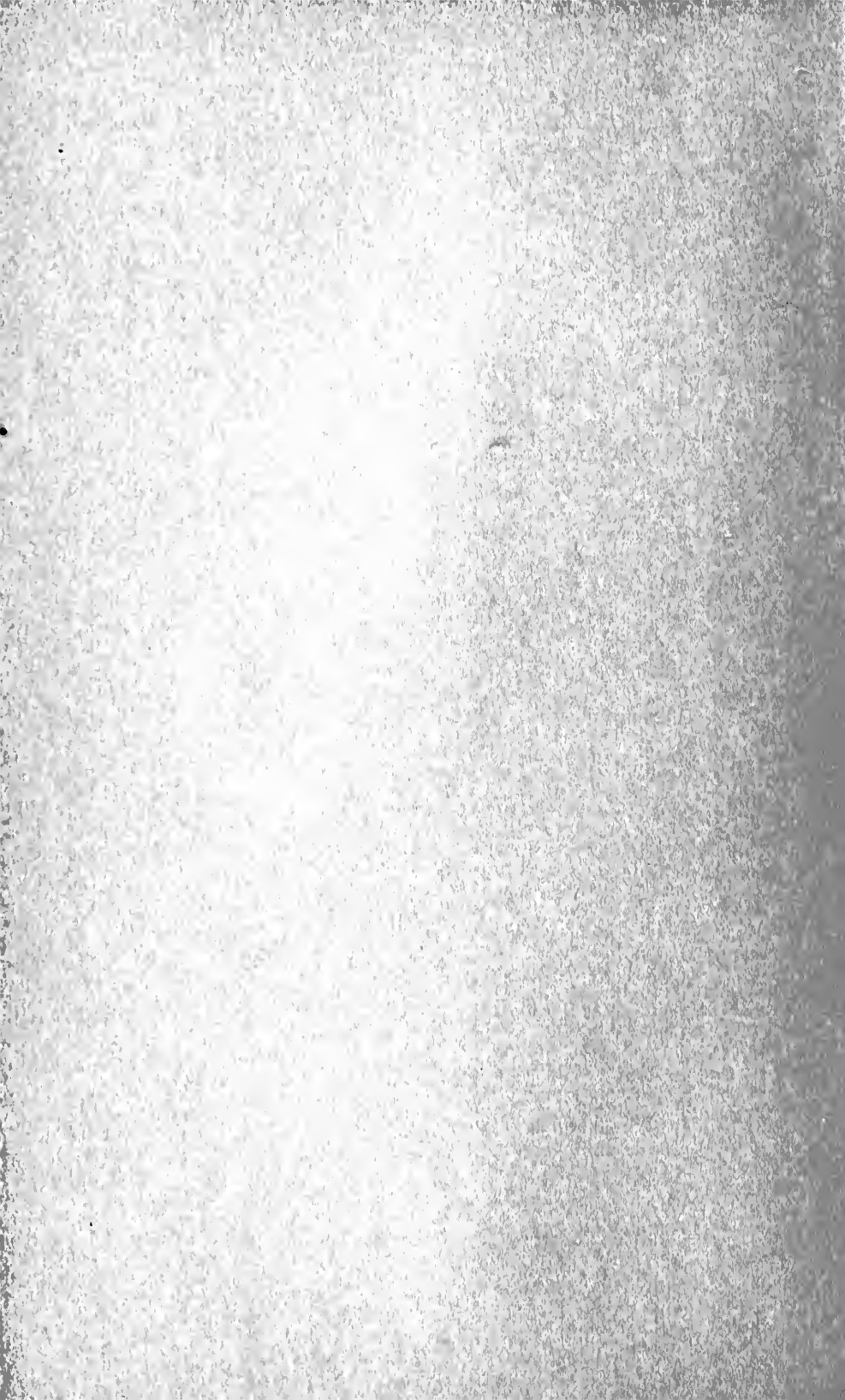
stories of Indian warfare compiled by the father of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq., for the history of this town by Governor Treadwell, might have been drawn on, or the stories heard in my own childhood to the droning accompaniment of the spinning-wheel, in the long winter evenings, when the labors of the day were over — blood-curdling tales of Indian massacres, interspersed with stories of New England witchcraft, of Captain Kidd and the satanic hosts who guarded his buried treasure — all devoutly believed in by the aged narrator. If, instead, I have given you but a bare list of names, it is, so far as it goes, a reliable one and an honorable one.

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THE EARLY INDUSTRIES OF FARMINGTON

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AN

# HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

**Annual Meeting**

OF

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY

OF

FARMINGTON, CONN.

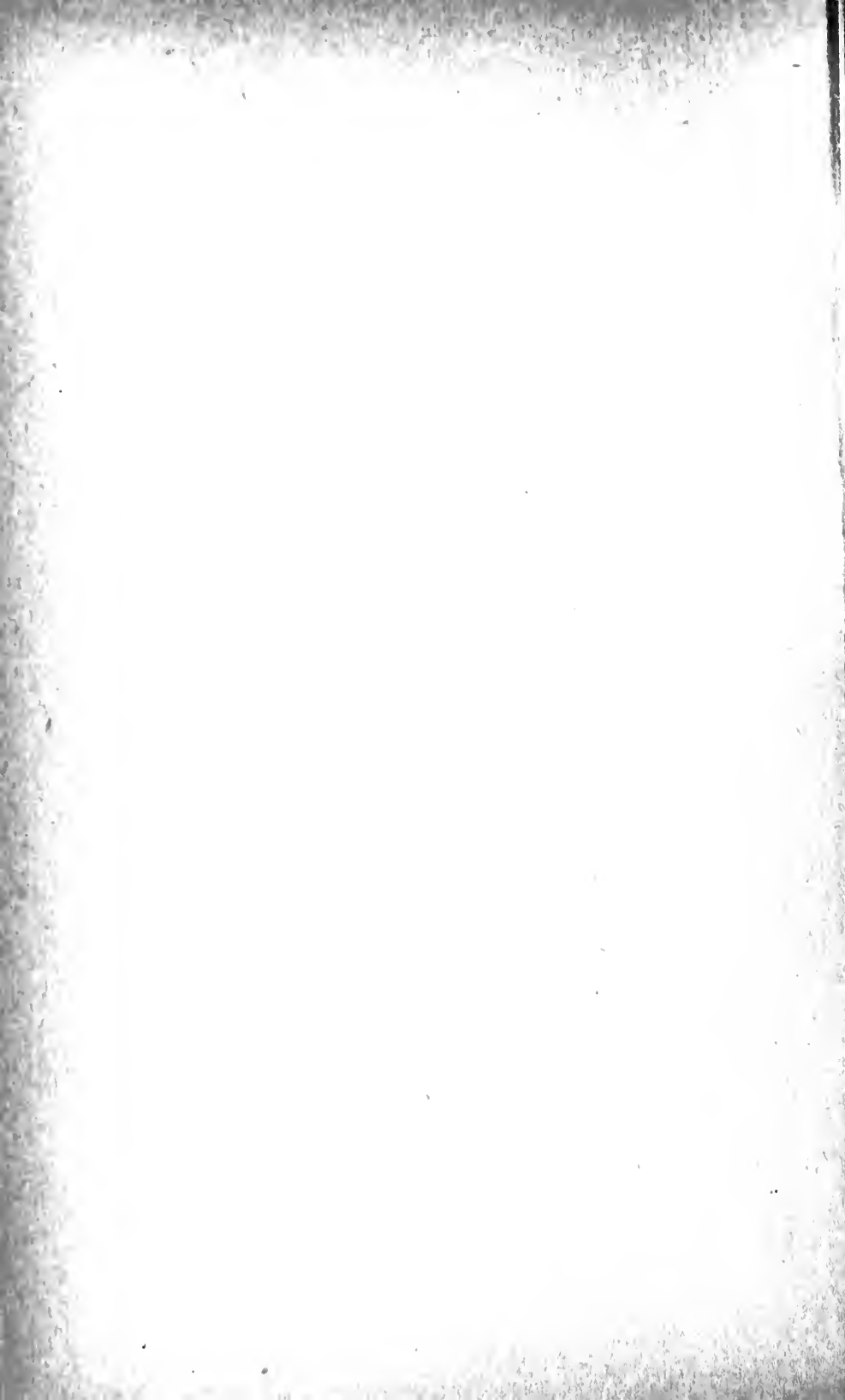
*September 14, 1898*

  
By JULIUS GAY  


HARTFORD, CONN.

Press of The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company

1898



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## ADDRESS.

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*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of Farmington :*

Having been requested by your Committee to read for your entertainment another paper on the Farmington of our ancestors, I propose to give this evening some account of the early industries of Farmington.

The first settlers of this village came from Hartford probably along the same path and through the same notch in the mountain we still use. Finding further progress westward interrupted by the river, they turned southward and built their first houses where runs the Main street of to-day. To each settler was allotted a strip of land about two hundred feet wide, bounded on the east by the mountain and on the west by the river. When their numbers increased, and their flocks and herds required ampler accommodation, they made use of the meadows and forest to the westward, enclosing them with a strong fence and a deep ditch, remains of the latter of which may still be traced from Avon southward through the Pine Woods nearly to Plainville. This fence kept their flocks from losing themselves in the forest, and was thought a sufficient bar against wolves, which do not easily climb an obstruction.

Here in much peace and contentment they lived the laborious lives of early settlers. Let us see what can be learned of their industries and daily life for the first sixty years of their residence. During this period forty-five, out of a much larger number who died, left estates

minutely inventoried by the courts of the day. These inventories, showing all a man's possessions, from his farm down to his smallest article of clothing, give us about all the information of his daily life and habits we possess.

They were all farmers, every one of them. The minister was the biggest farmer of them all. To him was allotted a double portion of land. The Rev. Roger Newton removed early and died elsewhere, but his successor, the Rev. Samuel Hooker, dying here in 1697, left a farm valued at £440, many horses, cattle, and sheep in his pastures, much wheat, rye, corn, and barley in his granary, and already sowed for the next year's crop, with abundant husbandry tools for the prosecution of this industry. With two sermons, not of the shortest, to write every week, and another for lecture day, with an occasional election sermon, and much public work in the colony, he must have been a laborious man. His estate, with the exception of that of Mr. John Wadsworth, was the largest inventoried before 1700.

The work of the farm was done largely by oxen. Almost every farmer owned one yoke, but none more than two, so far as can be learned. Horses were about twice as numerous as oxen, and were also used in the cultivation of land, as the inventory of their tackling proves. Every man had a cow or two but no large herds. John Hart, burned in his house in 1666, left six, as also did Nathaniel Kellogg, dying in 1657, but one and two were the common number. Sheep were held a necessity on every farm to furnish warm clothing in the long New England winter. John Orton, dying in 1695, left a flock of twenty-two, but the average number was ten. Swine were numerous. John Cowles' estate had thirty-eight. The average for a farmer was fifteen. A few hives of bees usually closed the list. Farming implements were much

as we knew them fifty years ago, before the day of horse rakes and mowing-machines, only a ruder construction. They had fans but no fanning-mills, trusting to the winds of heaven to winnow the grain from the chaff as in biblical times. Their carts and plows were home-made and so rudely built that the appraiser frequently estimated the value of the iron parts only. Josselyn in his "Two Voyages to New England," printed in 1673, advises the planter to buy his cart-wheels in England for fourteen shillings rather than trust to colonial workmanship. Certain tools were then common which some of us remember to have seen in our boyhood, long unused. There was the heavy and cumbersome brake for breaking flax, the wooden swingling knife for continuing the process, and the hetchel. Wool cards were also common. After flax, wheat was the most important crop, and rye was raised when the exhausted land would no longer bear wheat. Mislen, or a mixture of wheat and rye, was often sowed in the hope that one or the other grain might thrive. Barley was raised for the manufacture of malt, and we find even oats used for this purpose. It took the Englishman several generations to learn that he could live without beer. Wood, in his "New England's Prospect," printed in 1634, gives his English view of the matter. "Every family," he says, "having a spring of sweet waters betwixt them, which is far different from the waters of England, being not so sharp, but of a fatter substance, and of a more jetty color; it is thought there can be no better water in the world, yet dare I not prefer it before good beer as some have done." After the multiplication of apple orchards, cider largely took the place of beer. John Hart had a cider press in 1666 and Capt. William Lewis in 1690 had not only a cider mill but a malt mill, a still, and a supply of malt and hops. John Bronson in 1680 had ten barrels of cider in his cellar

valued at four pounds. Potatoes are not named. Probably none of the settlers had ever seen one. Peas and beans were common, but by far the largest crop was Indian corn. Corn was the first eatable thing which the starving Pilgrims could find after they left Plymouth Rock. The friendly Tisquantum showed them how to raise it. "Also he told them except they get fish and set with it (in these old grounds) it would come to nothing, and he showed them that in the middle of April they should have store enough come up the brook by which they began to build." So says Gov. Bradford in his history. Other Indian advice was to place in each hill a shad, a few kernels of corn, and a few beans. The shad was for manure, and the cornstalks formed in good time sufficient poles for the bean vines to climb. The savage meanwhile retiring to the sunny side of his wigwam trusted the rest to all bountiful nature, with a little assistance from his squaw. Other things the settlers soon learned. Of the blackbirds which soon pulled up their corn, Roger Williams writing in 1643 says, "Of this sort there be millions, which be great devourers of the Indian corn, as soon as it appears above the ground. Against these birds the Indians are very careful both to set their corn deep enough, that it may have a strong root, not so apt to be plucked up (yet not too deep, lest they bury it, and it never come up); as also they put up little watch houses in the middle of their fields, in which they, or their biggest children lodge, and, early in the morning, prevent the birds from devouring the corn." As for the crow, he says, "These birds, although they do the corn some hurt, yet scarce will one native amongst an hundred kill them, because they have a tradition, that the crow brought them at first an Indian grain of corn in one ear, and an Indian or French bean in another, from the great God Cawtantowwit's field in the southwest, from whence



they hold came all their corn and beans." In 1694 the town offered a reward of two pence for crows and one shilling the dozen for blackbirds. In Hartford, in 1707, it was held the duty of every good citizen to kill one dozen blackbirds each year, or pay a fine of one shilling. If he killed more than a dozen he was entitled to one penny for each bird. From that time to this many bounties have been paid and much powder burned, but the crow is still with us, and his morning voice is still heard as he wings his daily flight from the mountain to the meadow. The most troublesome animals the farmer had to contend with, were the wolves which, roaming by night in packs of ten or a dozen, with dreadful cries, devoured sheep, calves, and the smaller animals. From a stray leaf of the town accounts we learn that in 1718 Ebenezer Barnes, Stephen Hart, Samuel Scott, and Matthew Woodruff were each paid six shillings and eight pence for killing wolves. They were mostly killed in pits into which they were enticed by bait placed over the concealed mouth of the pit. They were poor climbers, and once in the pit their fate was sure. The road running from the eighth milestone southward from the Hartford road has, since 1747, and I know not how much longer, been known as the Wolf Pit road, and certain depressions in the ground used to be shown to credulous boys as the ancient wolf pits. Another very common method of destroying these animals, Josselyn tells us in his "New England's Rarities" of 1672. "The wolf," he says, "is very numerous, and go in companies, sometimes ten, twenty, or fewer, and so cunning, that seldom any are killed with guns or traps; but of late they have invented a way to destroy them by binding four mackerel hooks across with a brown thread, and then, wrapping some wool about them, they dip them in melted tallow till it be as round and big as an egg; these (when any beast has been killed by the

wolves) they scatter by the dead carcass after they have beaten off the wolves; about midnight the wolves are sure to return again to the place where they left the slaughtered beast, and the first thing they venture upon will be these balls of fat." Bears were frequently met with, but they made the farmers very little trouble, and were esteemed a good-natured animal, except when defending their young. The town paid for killing panthers in 1718 and in 1726, and probably in other years. In 1768 a bounty of three shillings was offered for wildcats, and on the 30th day of May, 1773, the town paid three shillings to Noah Hart for a wildcat, and the same day paid one shilling to John Newell, Jr., "for putting a strolling fellow in the stocks," wildcats and tramps being held in like estimation. One other animal the settlers feared more than all the others put together. It spared neither man nor beast, and its midnight roar was not a cheerful sound to the lonely settler. All over New England they called it a lion, with about as much knowledge of natural history as Nick Bottom, who held "a lion is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living." Wood, in his "New England's Prospect," says, "concerning lions, I will not say that I ever saw any myself, but some affirm that they have seen a lion at Cape Anne . . . some likewise, being lost in the woods, have heard such terrible roarings, as have made them much aghast; which must be devils or lions there being no other creatures which use to roar saving bears, which have not such a terrible kind of roaring." Sundry localities were named after the beast. A Lion's Hollow westward of the road to Plainville, and a Lion's Hole eastward of the road to Kensington were frequently mentioned in old deeds. A Lion's Hole near Dead Swamp is mentioned in 1686, and one, hardly the same, in 1705 on the Great Plain. The animal was without much doubt a

catamount. If you have ever seen the bronze figure of this beast standing on its granite pedestal in front of the site of the old Catamount Tavern in Bennington, Vermont, "grinning towards New York," you will not wonder at its unpleasant reputation.

Early in the history of this village, as in all new settlements, it became necessary for some of the farmers to engage in other industries essential to civilized life. The goodman could prepare wool and flax for the wheel of the goodwife, but not every one possessed a loom, or knew how to use it. Joseph Bird and his sons, Joseph, Samuel, and Thomas, living on Bird Hill, on the Hartford road, were all weavers before 1700. Simon Wrothum, a man conspicuous for his want of sympathy with the religious views of his townsmen, was also a weaver. Sergeant Stephen Hart, son of Deacon Stephen, had "looms, sleys, reeds, and other weaving tools," valued at £5-2s. Sergeant John Clark, who died in the Canada Expedition of 1709, had a coverlet of John Root's weaving, valued at 18 shillings. The latter was known as "John Root, weaver," as early as 1699. Samuel North, dying in 1682, left "A loom and tools belonging to it," valued at three pounds. Here, surely, were weavers enough to supply all reasonable requirements of the little village. Probably the goodwife of the settler fashioned the products of these many looms into substantial clothing, but, as early as 1697, Deacon Thomas Porter, son of the first Thomas, came to be known as "Thomas Porter, tailor." His house stood near the site of that of Judge E. H. Deming, and here the young men who desired something more stylish than home-made garments doubtless repaired. We regret our inability to describe the fashions of his shop. An inventory of the wardrobe of a respectable farmer of the day must suffice. Sergeant John Clark had four coats, one of kersey, one of serge, a cape-coat, lined, and an old coat.

Of waistcoats he had a blue and a serge. His breeches were severally of drugget, serge, and leather. He had a hat of castor beaver, two fringed muslin neckcloths, two pairs of gloves, and two speckled shirts. Further it is unnecessary to go. Five men, besides the minister, wore broadcloth,— John Judd, son of William ; Samuel Cowles, who, besides two broadcloth coats, valued at six pounds, had a damask vest and four pairs of silver buttons; Capt. John Stanley, who had a straight broadcloth coat of a sad color; Samuel Gridley, who also carried a silver-headed cane, and his son, Samuel, who had two coats, each three times as valuable as his father's, and silver buttons and buckles to match. The tide of luxury so deeply deplored by Gov. Treadwell years afterward had already set in. Samuel Langdon, son of Deacon Langdon, removing to Northampton and carrying thither the luxurious habits of his native village, was with divers persons “presented by the grand jury to the court at Northampton, March 26, 1676, for wearing of silk, and that in a flaunting manner, and others for long hair and other extravagances contrary to honest and sober order and demeanor, not becoming a wilderness state, at least the profession of Christianity and religion.” Mr. Langdon made his peace with the court by paying the clerk's fee, 2 shillings and 6 pence.

Samuel Woodruff, son of Matthew the immigrant, was the village shoemaker, commonly known as “Samuel Woodruff, cordwainer.” About 1700 he removed to Southington, and tradition calls him its first white inhabitant. John Newell, son of Thomas the immigrant, was another shoemaker. He removed to Waterbury with those who went from this village, but returned, and died unmarried in 1696. His inventory shows: “Shoe leather, lasts, and shoemaker's gears,” valued at 19 shillings, 9 pence. Benjamin Judd, son of Deacon Thomas, dying in

1698, left "Leather and shoemaker's tools to the value of one pound and six shillings." Jobanna Smith, who was killed in the "Falls Fight" of May 19, 1676, was the village cooper, and, after him, John Stedman and Samuel Bronson. Daniel Merrills was a tanner, and Joseph Hawley had a tan-yard. Thomas Lee, son of the first John, was described in the deed of David Lee of Northampton, weaver, as "Thomas Lee his brother, mason and bricklayer of Farmington," in 1697. Joiners must have been important members of the community, but I know of no one distinctly classed as such. Thomas Thomson the immigrant, a brother of Samuel Thomson, stationer, of London, dying in 1655, left "Tools for a carpenter and other small implements," valued at 5 pounds, 1 shilling. Richard Bronson, in 1687, left a full set of carpenter's tools. Deacon John Langdon left a set in 1689. William Hooker, son of Rev. Samuel Hooker, left a "turning lathe, with saws and other tools, for turning and joiner's work." He was a merchant, and these may have been a part of his goods. John Bronson and John Warner had each a pit saw, — useful tools before saw-mills could be built.

The Gridleys were the blacksmiths of the village. Samuel, son of the first Thomas, lived near where now stands the house of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq., and his shop was in the highway, as was the custom. Dying in 1712, his son Thomas succeeded to his trade, and was known as "Thomas Gridley, smith," to distinguish him from other Thomas Gridleys. His house, given him by his father in 1704, was on Bird's Hill, on the north side of the road to Hartford. The tools inventoried "in ye smith's shop" of Samuel Gridley were pretty much what you would find in a country forge of to-day. Mr. Gridley was also a merchant, and the long inventory of his estate is interesting as showing the evolution of the early coun-

try shopkeeper. Silver coin was scarce. Capt. William Lewis had, by his inventory, two pounds and four shillings; John Wadsworth, two pounds six shillings; John Newell, three pieces of eight, that is, fifteen shillings, and John Clark a sum not separately appraised; and if others had any, it was not specifically mentioned. Nathaniel Kellogg had wampum valued, in 1657, at two pounds. Everyone accepted in payment such goods and valuables as the debtor had to offer. Hence Mr. Gridley, as he perceived his goods increase, opened a shop for their sale. Of such wares he had accumulated 3 beaver skins, and the skins of 16 raccoons, 3 foxes, 5 wildcats, 1 bear, 1 deer, 7 musquashes, and 2 minks. Of his own handiwork, besides other iron ware, he sold nails, not by the pound but by count. There were 2,300 four-penny nails, 2,350 six-penny, 1,900 eight-penny, and 200 hob-nails. In addition to the goods he made or got in payment for work, his business came, in time, to embrace anything the farmer needed, from carts, harnesses, and scythes to jack-knives and catechisms. Here the ladies could procure calicoes, crapes, muslins, laces, ribbons, thimbles, thread, knitting-pins, combs, and fans, or could stock their pantrys with all manner of shining pewter. Here, too, the hunter found powder, flints, and bullets. John Wadsworth, dying in 1689, son of the first William, besides a large farm, had a shop containing goods not specifically enumerated, but valued at 87 pounds. He had also a cold still, an alembic, and sundry gallipots. Perhaps he combined the business of a druggist with other industries. He was probably the wealthiest man of the village. He left a library valued at £17-14s.-6d. His house stood a little south of where now lives Judge E. H. Deming. William Hooker, son of Rev. Samuel Hooker, lived on the west side of Main street, on the corner where the road turns off to the railroad station, and was also a shop-

keeper. His business, judging from the inventory of his goods, must have been largely in hardware, such as brass kettles, warming-pans, pewter of all sorts, including 10 pewter tankards, 5 dozen pewter spoons, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  dozen ocomy (that is alchemy) spoons. Farming, however, was his principal occupation. Roger Hooker, another son of Rev. Samuel Hooker, was also a merchant, and, dying in 1698, left as great a variety of goods as you will find in the country store of to-day, and some other things from a very valuable lot of bear skins, deer skins, and moose skins, down to fish-hooks and jewsharps. The jewsharp was the only instrument of music I find inventoried in a Farmington house, and was one of the three allowed in the Blue Laws fabricated by the Rev. Samuel Peters. The drum, I suppose, was town property, and was beaten by John Judd, drummer, at a regular salary. A little later, in 1718, four other men were each paid 13 shillings 4 pence for drumming. The three New England methods of calling the worshipers to the meeting-house were by the conch shell, the drum, and the bell. We had at this period reached the second stage of development, — the drum. According to an old hymn,

“New England Sabbath day  
Is heaven-like, still, and pure,  
When Israel walks the way  
Up to the temple's door.  
The time we tell  
When there to come  
By beat of drum  
Or sounding shell.”

Another industry, mostly speculative, absorbed much time and attention, — the search for valuable ores and the precious metals. In 1651 the General Court authorized John Winthrop, afterwards the sixth Governor of Connect-

icut, to search for mines and minerals, and set up works for operating the mines when found. His success, especially with the iron works at New Haven, was sufficient to encourage every land-owner here to believe untold wealth was just within reach. Deeds of land frequently appear upon our records reserving precious metals should such be discovered. The town committee, in 1712, leased to William Partridge and Jonathan Belcher, for eight years, "all mines and minerals, . . . iron mines only excepted, already found out and discovered and hereafter to be found and discovered." Two years later eight individuals lease to New York merchants the right to dig for "oar of Lead or other sort of mettle whatsoever," for sixty years. The mineral mostly sought hereabouts was black lead. John Oldham, afterwards murdered by the Indians, traveling through Connecticut in 1633, brought back "some black lead ore, of which the Indians said there was a whole quarry." In 1657 the Tunxis Indians sold to William Lewis and Samuel Steele "the hill from whence John Standly and John Andrews brought the black lead, and all the land within eight miles of that hill on every side." The sale of this hill was confirmed by deed of Pethuzo and Toxcronnock in 1714. This famous hill, with all its treasure, has disappeared from view as completely as the fabled island of Atlantis, often sought, never found. The Rev. R. M. Chipman, in his "History of Harwinton," is authority for the statement that sundry citizens of that town and vicinity, to the number of five hundred, headed by three venerable clergymen, on a day appointed, repaired to the woods supposed to contain the black lead, and, forming a long line, marched all day after the manner of beating the woods for game, to make sure of the discovery of the black lead by some of their number. Whether the story had some foundation, or was merely the joke of a minister on his



clerical brethren, does not appear, but the black lead is still undiscovered.

One of the most necessary institutions in a new settlement is the mill, saw-mills to provide lumber for houses, and grist-mills to grind the wheat and corn. Sometime during the first ten years of the village, John Bronson set up a mill on the brook thereafter known as the Mill Brook, and subsequently as the Fulling Mill Brook, and which, running down the mountain, crosses Main Street just north of the house of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq. Before 1650 he had sold it to Deacon Stephen Hart, who described the premises as "one parcel on which a mill standeth with a swamp adjoining to it in which the mill water cometh and containeth all the land that the country gave to John Bronson there, except the house lot." It was probably a saw-mill. In a grant of 1687 we hear of the Upper Saw-Mill Pond. Deacon Stephen Hart gave the mill in his lifetime to his three sons, John, Stephen, and Thomas. In 1712 the town "granted unto John Bronson liberty to build a fulling mill upon the brook that cometh down the mountain by Jonathan Smith's, and also the improvement of so much land as is necessary to set a mill upon, and for damming in any place between Jonathan Smith's lot and John Hart's, provided he do not damnify the cart way." In 1778 the town gave Solomon Cowles, Thomas Cowles, Isaac Bidwell, Amos Cowles, and Phinehas Cowles "liberty to erect one or more grist mills on the brook called the Fulling Mill Brook." Their petition sets forth "that although there is one grist mill now in said society, yet it does not at all times well accommodate the people with grinding, for in certain seasons of the year said mill is rendered entirely useless by reason of floods, ice, etc., whereby the people are obliged to carry their corn five or six miles to get it ground." The inference is that the first mill on the brook was a

saw-mill built before 1650, the second a fulling mill built in 1712, and that the first grist-mill was built on the river where a mill has been sustained to the present day. I find an early mention of it in the year 1701, which contains several points of interest. In that year Wenemo, an Indian, stole "a good fire-lock gun" from John Bates of Haddam, and another Indian, Nannouch, to save his friend from the very serious consequences, mortgaged to said Bates "two acres of land situated in Farmington meadow near the corn mill of Capt. Thomas Hart lying in the Indian Neck," and Samuel Hooker and Stephen Root testify "that we saw the Indian Nannouch deliver two acres of land commonly called this Indian's land afore mentioned to Mr. John Bates of Haddam by turf and twig." This ancient form of conveyance by the actual delivery of a piece of the soil and of the timber growing thereon, was doubtless more intelligible to the Indian mind than the drawing a picture of his totem at the bottom of a piece of paper inscribed with "Know all men by these presents," and other ponderous formulas.

Without going more at length into the industries of the men of that day, it is time we gave some attention to the equally laborious occupations of their wives and daughters. Perhaps the best way to illustrate the subject is to take you to the house of a well-to-do farmer and inspect the housekeeping and all the surroundings of its inmates. We will call on the 30th of May, 1712, at the house of Samuel Gridley, which, as I have already mentioned, stood near the site of the house of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq. The date is a little later than I could wish, but our knowledge of the house is better than that of any other. We will examine, not what might have been seen in such a house at that time, but what the appraisers, John Wadsworth, John Porter, and Isaac Cowles, found there that day, and made solemn oath that they found. The

female inmates of the house we are to inspect were the widow Mary and her three daughters, Sarah, a girl of eighteen who afterward married Nathaniel Cowles, Mary, aged four, who died unmarried, and Jerusha, a babe of four months who afterwards married Nehemiah Lewis. We will enter by the porch which opens into the hall, on either side of which are the parlor and kitchen, and back of all the leanto. Over each room except the leanto is a chamber, and over all the garret. In the porch we find much which had reference to out-of-door life, and which the modern housewife would certainly have requested Mr. Gridley to bestow elsewhere, — harnesses, saddles, the pillion, and pillion cloth on which the goodwife rode behind her husband to church or elsewhere, a chest and tools, a cart rope, a steel trap, and sundry other things. Entering the hall we find the furniture to consist of a wainscot chest, a table, a great chair, four lesser ones, three cushions and a pillow. Here are stored the arms which every man must have ready for instant use, his gun, pike, bayonet, rapier, back sword, and cutlass. I think there must have been a fireplace in the room, for we find two heaters, two smoothing irons, a spit, a pair of bellows, two trammels, and their hooks. Here are pots and kettles, large and small, of brass and iron. There is a goodly display of shining pewter, tankards, plates, basins, beakers, porringers, cups with handles, barrel cups, pewter measures of all sizes, and pewter bottles. Here is much wooden ware, earthen ware, and even china ware, and here the family supply of medicines, Matthew's pills, blistering salve, and sundry drugs whose names I must leave for the professional practitioner to transcribe. Here are the goodman's money scales and weights, his spectacles, and his library, a collection of books which would have been called good Sunday reading fifty years ago. They are an old Bible, a psalm book,

and other books entitled "ΚΟΜΕΤΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ, Or a Discourse Concerning Comets; wherein the Nature of Blazing Stars is Enquired into: With an Historical Account of all the Comets which have appeared from the Beginning of the World unto this present Year, 1683, . . . By Increase Mather." "Time and the End of Time," being two discourses by Rev. John Fox of Woburn, Mass., 1701. "Zion in Distress; or the Groans of the Protestant Church;" printed in 1683 for Samuel Phillips. "Spiritual Almanack," "The Unpardonable Sin," "Divine Providence Opened," "Man's chief End to Glorifie God, or Some Brief Sermon — Notes on 1 Cor. 10. 31.— By the Reverend Mr. John Bailey, Sometime Preacher and Prisoner of Christ at Limerick in Ireland, and now Pastor to the Church of Christ in Watertown in New-England." 1689, "Commentary on Faith," "How to Walk with God," "The Wonders of the Invisible World," by Rev. Cotton Mather, a very famous book on witchcraft in Salem and elsewhere, and on the ordinary devices of the devil. It was answered by Robert Calef's "More Wonders of the Invisible World," which was burned by order of Dr. Increase Mather, President of Harvard College, in the college yard. We find also, "Some Account of the Life of Henry Gearing," by J. Shower, "A Warning to prepare for Death," a New Testament, "A Book on Numbers," whether an arithmetic or a commentary on one of the books of the Pentateuch does not appear, "a law book, and several pieces of books." The latter entry seems to show that the library was much read, and even the fragments of books were carefully preserved. From the hall we pass to the kitchen, where we find in the big fireplace a pair of cast-iron fire dogs weighing sixty-four pounds, two pairs of tongs, a peel, two trammels and a jack. The furniture seems scanty, a table, a chest, a truckle bedstead, a great chair and two small ones. Sundry baskets, keel-

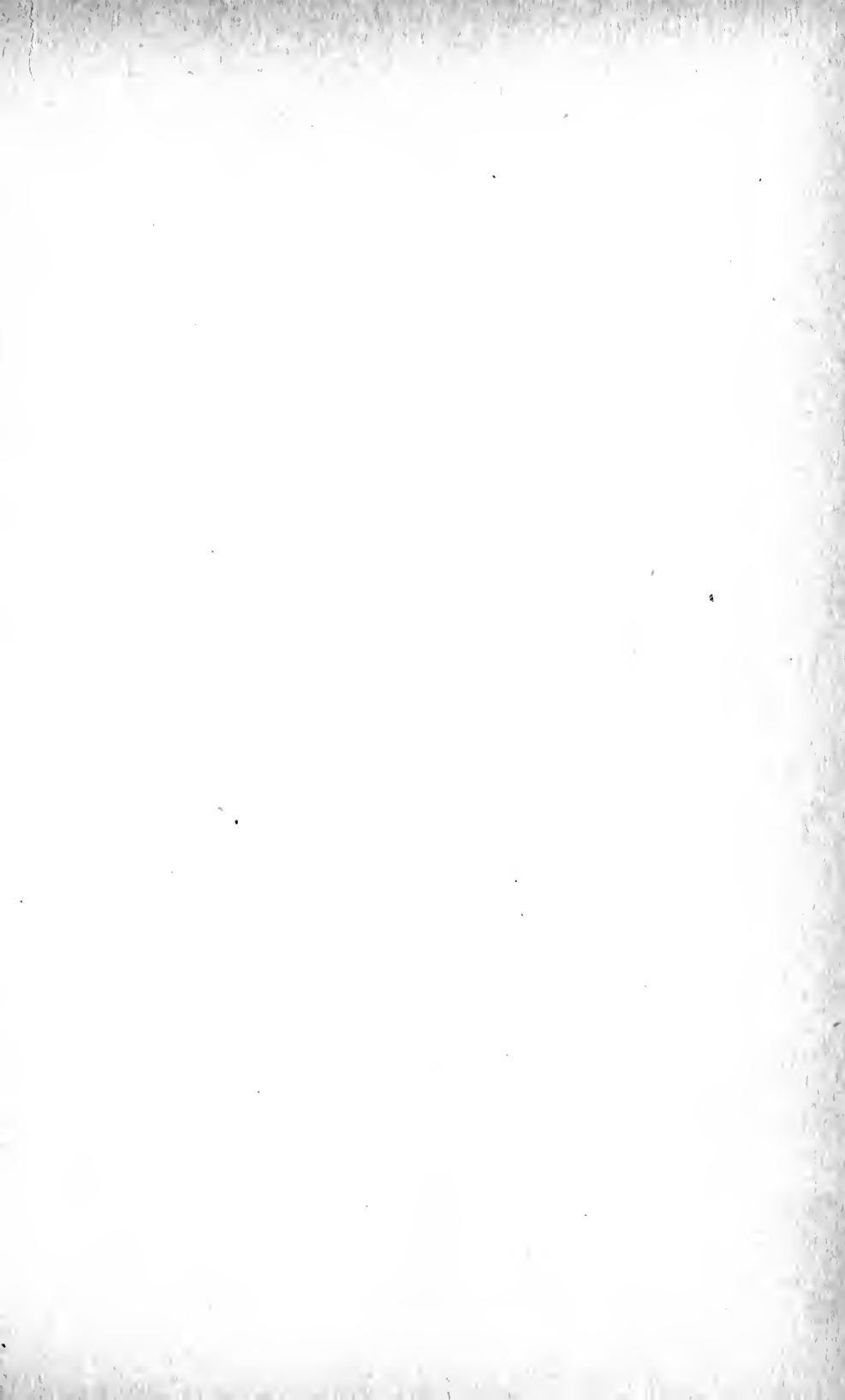
ers, tubs, pails, and kettles stand around. The main features of the kitchen, however, are the loom, the great wheel, two linen wheels, a hand reel, and the great piles of linen sheets, pillow bears, table-cloths, towels, and napkins, largely no doubt the production of the loom and wheels, and large supplies of yarn, tow, and flax for further manufacture. Spinning and storing up vast supplies of spotless linen against their wedding day, were the great accomplishments of the young maiden. We read of spinning matches which lasted from early dawn to nine o'clock at night, the contestants being supplied with food by other hands while they worked, and finally with bloody fingers sinking from sheer exhaustion. Spinning bees have continued until within a few years in some rural districts. I remember as late as the fall of 1859, passing, on a by-road near Farmington, Maine, just at sunset, a merry procession of young women with their great wheels carried by young men, on their way to a contest with the spinners of the next village. Let us now inspect the parlor, then as since the crowning glory of the house. We find a bedstead with a feather bed and a great supply of blankets and coverlids, and, hanging over all, a set of calico curtains with a calico vallance to match. A warming-pan, a most useful article in a cold room, completes the sleeping equipment. Other furniture is three chests, a trunk, a round table, a great chair, three little ditto, a joint stool, and five cushions. There is also a cupboard and a carpet for said cupboard. A carpet was not a floor cloth but a covering to furniture often showily embroidered by its owner as a specimen of her skill. Probably a green rug, valued at five shillings, was for the floor. Here are Mr. Gridley's pair of pistols and holster. There now remains down stairs only the leanto, which will not detain us long, though it probably detained Mrs. Gridley many a weary hour, for here are the cheese-press,

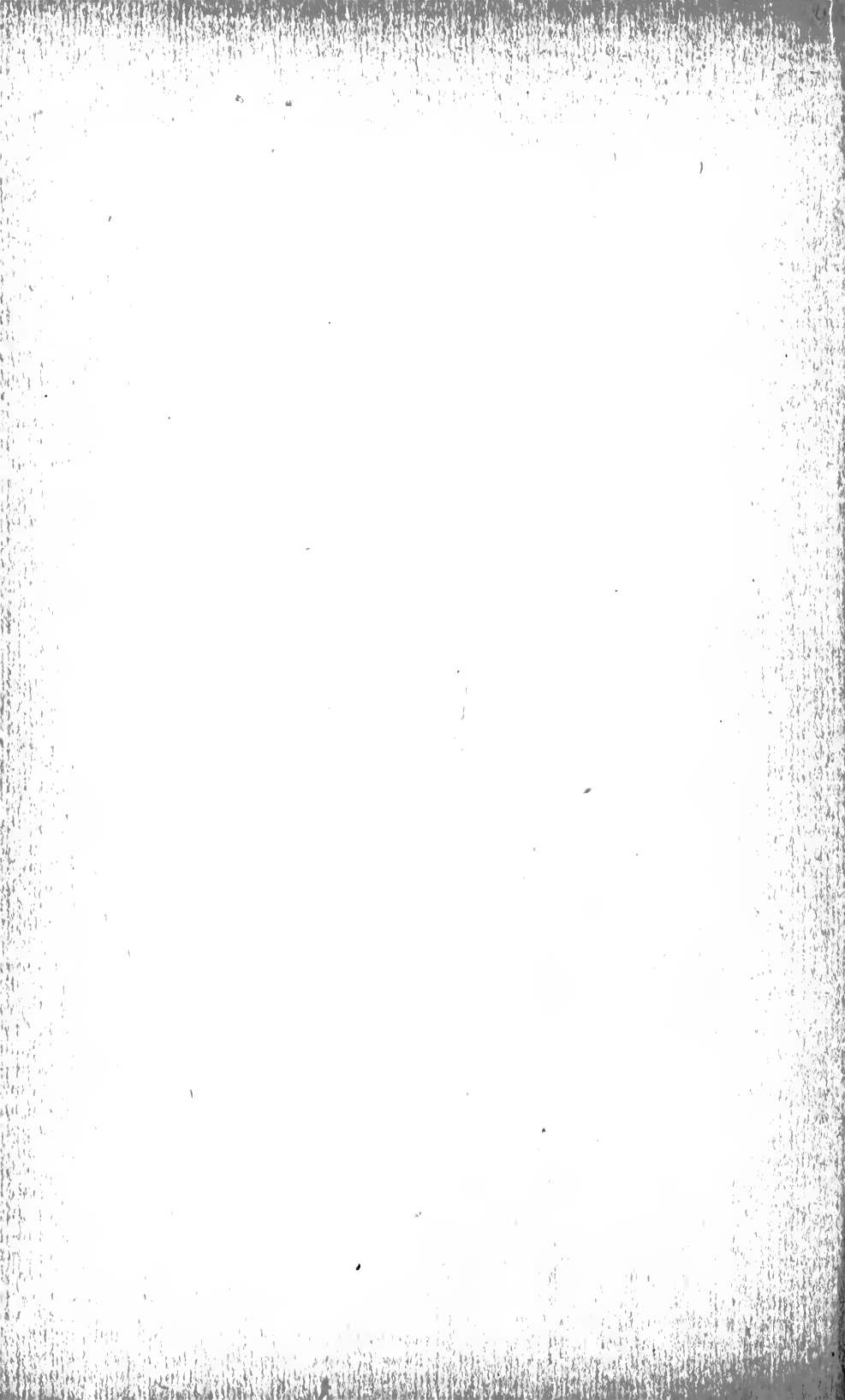
and churn, the butter tubs, and all the machinery of the dairy, and, last of all, an hour-glass with which the various mysteries of the place were timed. This hour-glass is the only instrument for the measurement of time I find, except the watch and clock of Rev. Samuel Hooker. The sun dial answered very well when the sun shone, and a blast on a conch shell when the good wife decreed it to be dinner time, called the village home at noon.

If you please we will now walk up stairs. In the parlor chamber we find a bed with a silk grass pillow and two leather pillows weighing ten pounds, and a goodly supply of blankets, coverlids, curtains, etc. There are a number of chests and boxes and twenty-one pounds of yarn, and there was room left somewhere for Mr. Gridley to store 50 bushels of wheat and 80 of rye, a practice which the tidy housekeeper of to-day might not approve in her best chamber. It was, however, the custom to store grain in the house where it would be under the protection of the household cat, as we see illustrated in the picture books of to-day.

"This is the cat  
That killed the rat  
That ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built."

In the hall chamber we find a feather bed and belongings and a great store of wheat, barley, corn, and peas in baskets, bags, and barrels. The porch chamber is given up to malt, oats, and peas. In the garret are 10 bushels of rye and 100 of indian corn. If you care to inspect the cellar you will find it pretty well filled with barrels of pork, beer, soap, hops, oatmeal, and other family stores. Here we must take leave of Mrs. Gridley and her household treasures, pleased no doubt that our lot has fallen two centuries later, and that seven generations of men have come and gone and left us the better for their hardy industries and honest lives.







THE EARLY INDUSTRIES OF FARMINGTON

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AN  
HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

Annual Meeting

OF

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY

OF

FARMINGTON, CONN.

*September 14, 1898*



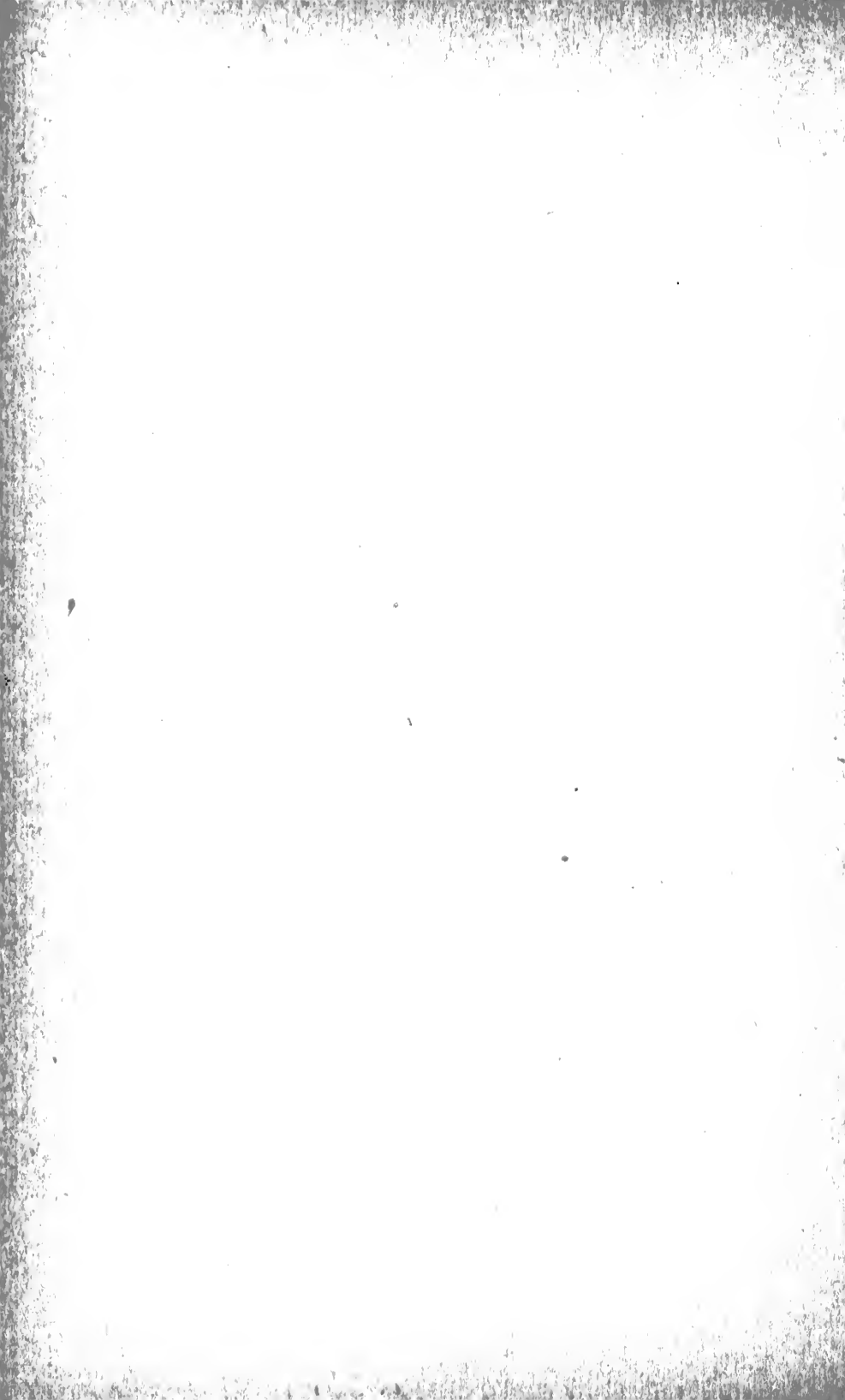
By JULIUS GAY



HARTFORD, CONN.

Press of The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company

1898



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## ADDRESS.

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*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of Farmington :*

Having been requested by your Committee to read for your entertainment another paper on the Farmington of our ancestors, I propose to give this evening some account of the early industries of Farmington.

The first settlers of this village came from Hartford probably along the same path and through the same notch in the mountain we still use. Finding further progress westward interrupted by the river, they turned southward and built their first houses where runs the Main street of to-day. To each settler was allotted a strip of land about two hundred feet wide, bounded on the east by the mountain and on the west by the river. When their numbers increased, and their flocks and herds required ampler accommodation, they made use of the meadows and forest to the westward, enclosing them with a strong fence and a deep ditch, remains of the latter of which may still be traced from Avon southward through the Pine Woods nearly to Plainville. This fence kept their flocks from losing themselves in the forest, and was thought a sufficient bar against wolves, which do not easily climb an obstruction.

Here in much peace and contentment they lived the laborious lives of early settlers. Let us see what can be learned of their industries and daily life for the first sixty years of their residence. During this period forty-five, out of a much larger number who died, left estates

minutely inventoried by the courts of the day. These inventories, showing all a man's possessions, from his farm down to his smallest article of clothing, give us about all the information of his daily life and habits we possess.

They were all farmers, every one of them. The minister was the biggest farmer of them all. To him was allotted a double portion of land. The Rev. Roger Newton removed early and died elsewhere, but his successor, the Rev. Samuel Hooker, dying here in 1697, left a farm valued at £440, many horses, cattle, and sheep in his pastures, much wheat, rye, corn, and barley in his granary, and already sowed for the next year's crop, with abundant husbandry tools for the prosecution of this industry. With two sermons, not of the shortest, to write every week, and another for lecture day, with an occasional election sermon, and much public work in the colony, he must have been a laborious man. His estate, with the exception of that of Mr. John Wadsworth, was the largest inventoried before 1700.

The work of the farm was done largely by oxen. Almost every farmer owned one yoke, but none more than two, so far as can be learned. Horses were about twice as numerous as oxen, and were also used in the cultivation of land, as the inventory of their tackling proves. Every man had a cow or two but no large herds. John Hart, burned in his house in 1666, left six, as also did Nathaniel Kellogg, dying in 1657, but one and two were the common number. Sheep were held a necessity on every farm to furnish warm clothing in the long New England winter. John Orton, dying in 1695, left a flock of twenty-two, but the average number was ten. Swine were numerous. John Cowles' estate had thirty-eight. The average for a farmer was fifteen. A few hives of bees usually closed the list. Farming implements were much

as we knew them fifty years ago, before the day of horse rakes and mowing-machines, only a ruder construction. They had fans but no fanning-mills, trusting to the winds of heaven to winnow the grain from the chaff as in biblical times. Their carts and plows were home-made and so rudely built that the appraiser frequently estimated the value of the iron parts only. Josselyn in his "Two Voyages to New England," printed in 1673, advises the planter to buy his cart-wheels in England for fourteen shillings rather than trust to colonial workmanship. Certain tools were then common which some of us remember to have seen in our boyhood, long unused. There was the heavy and cumbersome brake for breaking flax, the wooden swinging knife for continuing the process, and the hetchel. Wool cards were also common. After flax, wheat was the most important crop, and rye was raised when the exhausted land would no longer bear wheat. Mislen, or a mixture of wheat and rye, was often sowed in the hope that one or the other grain might thrive. Barley was raised for the manufacture of malt, and we find even oats used for this purpose. It took the Englishman several generations to learn that he could live without beer. Wood, in his "New England's Prospect," printed in 1634, gives his English view of the matter. "Every family," he says, "having a spring of sweet waters betwixt them, which is far different from the waters of England, being not so sharp, but of a fatter substance, and of a more jetty color; it is thought there can be no better water in the world, yet dare I not prefer it before good beer as some have done." After the multiplication of apple orchards, cider largely took the place of beer. John Hart had a cider press in 1666 and Capt. William Lewis in 1690 had not only a cider mill but a malt mill, a still, and a supply of malt and hops. John Bronson in 1680 had ten barrels of cider in his cellar

valued at four pounds. Potatoes are not named. Probably none of the settlers had ever seen one. Peas and beans were common, but by far the largest crop was Indian corn. Corn was the first eatable thing which the starving Pilgrims could find after they left Plymouth Rock. The friendly Tisquantum showed them how to raise it. "Also he told them except they get fish and set with it (in these old grounds) it would come to nothing, and he showed them that in the middle of April they should have store enough come up the brook by which they began to build." So says Gov. Bradford in his history. Other Indian advice was to place in each hill a shad, a few kernels of corn, and a few beans. The shad was for manure, and the cornstalks formed in good time sufficient poles for the bean vines to climb. The savage meanwhile retiring to the sunny side of his wigwam trusted the rest to all bountiful nature, with a little assistance from his squaw. Other things the settlers soon learned. Of the blackbirds which soon pulled up their corn, Roger Williams writing in 1643 says, "Of this sort there be millions, which be great devourers of the Indian corn, as soon as it appears above the ground. Against these birds the Indians are very careful both to set their corn deep enough, that it may have a strong root, not so apt to be plucked up (yet not too deep, lest they bury it, and it never come up); as also they put up little watch houses in the middle of their fields, in which they, or their biggest children lodge, and, early in the morning, prevent the birds from devouring the corn." As for the crow, he says, "These birds, although they do the corn some hurt, yet scarce will one native amongst an hundred kill them, because they have a tradition, that the crow brought them at first an Indian grain of corn in one ear, and an Indian or French bean in another, from the great God Cawtantowwit's field in the southwest, from whence



they hold came all their corn and beans." In 1694 the town offered a reward of two pence for crows and one shilling the dozen for blackbirds. In Hartford, in 1707, it was held the duty of every good citizen to kill one dozen blackbirds each year, or pay a fine of one shilling. If he killed more than a dozen he was entitled to one penny for each bird. From that time to this many bounties have been paid and much powder burned, but the crow is still with us, and his morning voice is still heard as he wings his daily flight from the mountain to the meadow. The most troublesome animals the farmer had to contend with, were the wolves which, roaming by night in packs of ten or a dozen, with dreadful cries, devoured sheep, calves, and the smaller animals. From a stray leaf of the town accounts we learn that in 1718 Ebenezer Barnes, Stephen Hart, Samuel Scott, and Matthew Woodruff were each paid six shillings and eight pence for killing wolves. They were mostly killed in pits into which they were enticed by bait placed over the concealed mouth of the pit. They were poor climbers, and once in the pit their fate was sure. The road running from the eighth milestone southward from the Hartford road has, since 1747, and I know not how much longer, been known as the Wolf Pit road, and certain depressions in the ground used to be shown to credulous boys as the ancient wolf pits. Another very common method of destroying these animals, Josselyn tells us in his "New England's Rarities" of 1672. "The wolf," he says, "is very numerous, and go in companies, sometimes ten, twenty, or fewer, and so cunning, that seldom any are killed with guns or traps; but of late they have invented a way to destroy them by binding four mackerel hooks across with a brown thread, and then, wrapping some wool about them, they dip them in melted tallow till it be as round and big as an egg; these (when any beast has been killed by the

wolves) they scatter by the dead carcass after they have beaten off the wolves; about midnight the wolves are sure to return again to the place where they left the slaughtered beast, and the first thing they venture upon will be these balls of fat." Bears were frequently met with, but they made the farmers very little trouble, and were esteemed a good-natured animal, except when defending their young. The town paid for killing panthers in 1718 and in 1726, and probably in other years. In 1768 a bounty of three shillings was offered for wildcats, and on the 30th day of May, 1773, the town paid three shillings to Noah Hart for a wildcat, and the same day paid one shilling to John Newell, Jr., "for putting a strolling fellow in the stocks," wildcats and tramps being held in like estimation. One other animal the settlers feared more than all the others put together. It spared neither man nor beast, and its midnight roar was not a cheerful sound to the lonely settler. All over New England they called it a lion, with about as much knowledge of natural history as Nick Bottom, who held "a lion is a most dreadful thing; for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living." Wood, in his "New England's Prospect," says, "concerning lions, I will not say that I ever saw any myself, but some affirm that they have seen a lion at Cape Anne . . . some likewise, being lost in the woods, have heard such terrible roarings, as have made them much aghast; which must be devils or lions there being no other creatures which use to roar saving bears, which have not such a terrible kind of roaring." Sundry localities were named after the beast. A Lion's Hollow westward of the road to Plainville, and a Lion's Hole eastward of the road to Kensington were frequently mentioned in old deeds. A Lion's Hole near Dead Swamp is mentioned in 1686, and one, hardly the same, in 1705 on the Great Plain. The animal was without much doubt a

catamount. If you have ever seen the bronze figure of this beast standing on its granite pedestal in front of the site of the old Catamount Tavern in Bennington, Vermont, "grinning towards New York," you will not wonder at its unpleasant reputation.

Early in the history of this village, as in all new settlements, it became necessary for some of the farmers to engage in other industries essential to civilized life. The goodman could prepare wool and flax for the wheel of the goodwife, but not every one possessed a loom, or knew how to use it. Joseph Bird and his sons, Joseph, Samuel, and Thomas, living on Bird Hill, on the Hartford road, were all weavers before 1700. Simon Wrothum, a man conspicuous for his want of sympathy with the religious views of his townsmen, was also a weaver. Sergeant Stephen Hart, son of Deacon Stephen, had "looms, sleys, reeds, and other weaving tools," valued at £5-2s. Sergeant John Clark, who died in the Canada Expedition of 1709, had a coverlet of John Root's weaving, valued at 18 shillings. The latter was known as "John Root, weaver," as early as 1699. Samuel North, dying in 1682, left "A loom and tools belonging to it," valued at three pounds. Here, surely, were weavers enough to supply all reasonable requirements of the little village. Probably the goodwife of the settler fashioned the products of these many looms into substantial clothing, but, as early as 1697, Deacon Thomas Porter, son of the first Thomas, came to be known as "Thomas Porter, tailor." His house stood near the site of that of Judge E. H. Deming, and here the young men who desired something more stylish than home-made garments doubtless repaired. We regret our inability to describe the fashions of his shop. An inventory of the wardrobe of a respectable farmer of the day must suffice. Sergeant John Clark had four coats, one of kersey, one of serge, a cape-coat, lined, and an old coat.

Of waistcoats he had a blue and a serge. His breeches were severally of drugget, serge, and leather. He had a hat of castor beaver, two fringed muslin neckcloths, two pairs of gloves, and two speckled shirts. Further it is unnecessary to go. Five men, besides the minister, wore broadcloth,— John Judd, son of William; Samuel Cowles, who, besides two broadcloth coats, valued at six pounds, had a damask vest and four pairs of silver buttons; Capt. John Stanley, who had a straight broadcloth coat of a sad color; Samuel Gridley, who also carried a silver-headed cane, and his son, Samuel, who had two coats, each three times as valuable as his father's, and silver buttons and buckles to match. The tide of luxury so deeply deplored by Gov. Treadwell years afterward had already set in. Samuel Langdon, son of Deacon Langdon, removing to Northampton and carrying thither the luxurious habits of his native village, was with divers persons "presented by the grand jury to the court at Northampton, March 26, 1676, for wearing of silk, and that in a flaunting manner, and others for long hair and other extravagances contrary to honest and sober order and demeanor, not becoming a wilderness state, at least the profession of Christianity and religion." Mr. Langdon made his peace with the court by paying the clerk's fee, 2 shillings and 6 pence.

Samuel Woodruff, son of Matthew the immigrant, was the village shoemaker, commonly known as "Samuel Woodruff, cordwainer." About 1700 he removed to Southington, and tradition calls him its first white inhabitant. John Newell, son of Thomas the immigrant, was another shoemaker. He removed to Waterbury with those who went from this village, but returned, and died unmarried in 1696. His inventory shows: "Shoe leather, lasts, and shoemaker's gears," valued at 19 shillings, 9 pence. Benjamin Judd, son of Deacon Thomas, dying in

1698, left "Leather and shoemaker's tools to the value of one pound and six shillings." Jobanna Smith, who was killed in the "Falls Fight" of May 19, 1676, was the village cooper, and, after him, John Stedman and Samuel Bronson. Daniel Merrills was a tanner, and Joseph Hawley had a tan-yard. Thomas Lee, son of the first John, was described in the deed of David Lee of Northampton, weaver, as "Thomas Lee his brother, mason and brick-layer of Farmington," in 1697. Joiners must have been important members of the community, but I know of no one distinctly classed as such. Thomas Thomson the immigrant, a brother of Samuel Thomson, stationer, of London, dying in 1655, left "Tools for a carpenter and other small implements," valued at 5 pounds, 1 shilling. Richard Bronson, in 1687, left a full set of carpenter's tools. Deacon John Langdon left a set in 1689. William Hooker, son of Rev. Samuel Hooker, left a "turning lathe, with saws and other tools, for turning and joiner's work." He was a merchant, and these may have been a part of his goods. John Bronson and John Warner had each a pit saw, — useful tools before saw-mills could be built.

The Gridleys were the blacksmiths of the village. Samuel, son of the first Thomas, lived near where now stands the house of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq., and his shop was in the highway, as was the custom. Dying in 1712, his son Thomas succeeded to his trade, and was known as "Thomas Gridley, smith," to distinguish him from other Thomas Gridleys. His house, given him by his father in 1704, was on Bird's Hill, on the north side of the road to Hartford. The tools inventoried "in ye smith's shop" of Samuel Gridley were pretty much what you would find in a country forge of to-day. Mr. Gridley was also a merchant, and the long inventory of his estate is interesting as showing the evolution of the early coun-

try shopkeeper. Silver coin was scarce. Capt. William Lewis had, by his inventory, two pounds and four shillings; John Wadsworth, two pounds six shillings; John Newell, three pieces of eight, that is, fifteen shillings, and John Clark a sum not separately appraised; and if others had any, it was not specifically mentioned. Nathaniel Kellogg had wampum valued, in 1657, at two pounds. Everyone accepted in payment such goods and valuables as the debtor had to offer. Hence Mr. Gridley, as he perceived his goods increase, opened a shop for their sale. Of such wares he had accumulated 3 beaver skins, and the skins of 16 raccoons, 3 foxes, 5 wildcats, 1 bear, 1 deer, 7 musquashes, and 2 minks. Of his own handiwork, besides other iron ware, he sold nails, not by the pound but by count. There were 2,300 four-penny nails, 2,350 six-penny, 1,900 eight-penny, and 200 hob-nails. In addition to the goods he made or got in payment for work, his business came, in time, to embrace anything the farmer needed, from carts, harnesses, and scythes to jack-knives and catechisms. Here the ladies could procure calicoes, crapes, muslins, laces, ribbons, thimbles, thread, knitting-pins, combs, and fans, or could stock their pantrys with all manner of shining pewter. Here, too, the hunter found powder, flints, and bullets. John Wadsworth, dying in 1689, son of the first William, besides a large farm, had a shop containing goods not specifically enumerated, but valued at 87 pounds. He had also a cold still, an alembic, and sundry gallipots. Perhaps he combined the business of a druggist with other industries. He was probably the wealthiest man of the village. He left a library valued at £17-14s.-6d. His house stood a little south of where now lives Judge E. H. Deming. William Hooker, son of Rev. Samuel Hooker, lived on the west side of Main street, on the corner where the road turns off to the railroad station, and was also a shop-

keeper. His business, judging from the inventory of his goods, must have been largely in hardware, such as brass kettles, warming-pans, pewter of all sorts, including 10 pewter tankards, 5 dozen pewter spoons, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  dozen ocomy (that is alchemy) spoons. Farming, however, was his principal occupation. Roger Hooker, another son of Rev. Samuel Hooker, was also a merchant, and, dying in 1698, left as great a variety of goods as you will find in the country store of to-day, and some other things from a very valuable lot of bear skins, deer skins, and moose skins, down to fish-hooks and jewsharps. The jewsharp was the only instrument of music I find inventoried in a Farmington house, and was one of the three allowed in the Blue Laws fabricated by the Rev. Samuel Peters. The drum, I suppose, was town property, and was beaten by John Judd, drummer, at a regular salary. A little later, in 1718, four other men were each paid 13 shillings 4 pence for drumming. The three New England methods of calling the worshipers to the meeting-house were by the conch shell, the drum, and the bell. We had at this period reached the second stage of development, — the drum. According to an old hymn,

“ New England Sabbath day  
Is heaven-like, still, and pure,  
When Israel walks the way  
Up to the temple's door.  
The time we tell  
When there to come  
By beat of drum  
Or sounding shell.”

Another industry, mostly speculative, absorbed much time and attention, — the search for valuable ores and the precious metals. In 1651 the General Court authorized John Winthrop, afterwards the sixth Governor of Connect-

icut, to search for mines and minerals, and set up works for operating the mines when found. His success, especially with the iron works at New Haven, was sufficient to encourage every land-owner here to believe untold wealth was just within reach. Deeds of land frequently appear upon our records reserving precious metals should such be discovered. The town committee, in 1712, leased to William Partridge and Jonathan Belcher, for eight years, "all mines and minerals, . . . iron mines only excepted, already found out and discovered and hereafter to be found and discovered." Two years later eight individuals lease to New York merchants the right to dig for "oar of Lead or other sort of mettle whatsoever," for sixty years. The mineral mostly sought hereabouts was black lead. John Oldham, afterwards murdered by the Indians, traveling through Connecticut in 1633, brought back "some black lead ore, of which the Indians said there was a whole quarry." In 1657 the Tunxis Indians sold to William Lewis and Samuel Steele "the hill from whence John Standly and John Andrews brought the black lead, and all the land within eight miles of that hill on every side." The sale of this hill was confirmed by deed of Pethuzo and Toxeronnock in 1714. This famous hill, with all its treasure, has disappeared from view as completely as the fabled island of Atlantis, often sought, never found. The Rev. R. M. Chipman, in his "History of Harwinton," is authority for the statement that sundry citizens of that town and vicinity, to the number of five hundred, headed by three venerable clergymen, on a day appointed, repaired to the woods supposed to contain the black lead, and, forming a long line, marched all day after the manner of beating the woods for game, to make sure of the discovery of the black lead by some of their number. Whether the story had some foundation, or was merely the joke of a minister on his



clerical brethren, does not appear, but the black lead is still undiscovered.

One of the most necessary institutions in a new settlement is the mill, saw-mills to provide lumber for houses, and grist-mills to grind the wheat and corn. Sometime during the first ten years of the village, John Bronson set up a mill on the brook thereafter known as the Mill Brook, and subsequently as the Fulling Mill Brook, and which, running down the mountain, crosses Main Street just north of the house of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq. Before 1650 he had sold it to Deacon Stephen Hart, who described the premises as "one parcel on which a mill standeth with a swamp adjoining to it in which the mill water cometh and containeth all the land that the country gave to John Bronson there, except the house lot." It was probably a saw-mill. In a grant of 1687 we hear of the Upper Saw-Mill Pond. Deacon Stephen Hart gave the mill in his lifetime to his three sons, John, Stephen, and Thomas. In 1712 the town "granted unto John Bronson liberty to build a fulling mill upon the brook that cometh down the mountain by Jonathan Smith's, and also the improvement of so much land as is necessary to set a mill upon, and for damming in any place between Jonathan Smith's lot and John Hart's, provided he do not damnify the cart way." In 1778 the town gave Solomon Cowles, Thomas Cowles, Isaac Bidwell, Amos Cowles, and Phinehas Cowles "liberty to erect one or more grist mills on the brook called the Fulling Mill Brook." Their petition sets forth "that although there is one grist mill now in said society, yet it does not at all times well accommodate the people with grinding, for in certain seasons of the year said mill is rendered entirely useless by reason of floods, ice, etc., whereby the people are obliged to carry their corn five or six miles to get it ground." The inference is that the first mill on the brook was a

saw-mill built before 1650, the second a fulling mill built in 1712, and that the first grist-mill was built on the river where a mill has been sustained to the present day. I find an early mention of it in the year 1701, which contains several points of interest. In that year Wenemo, an Indian, stole "a good fire-lock gun" from John Bates of Haddam, and another Indian, Nannouch, to save his friend from the very serious consequences, mortgaged to said Bates "two acres of land situated in Farmington meadow near the corn mill of Capt. Thomas Hart lying in the Indian Neck," and Samuel Hooker and Stephen Root testify "that we saw the Indian Nannouch deliver two acres of land commonly called this Indian's land afore mentioned to Mr. John Bates of Haddam by turf and twig." This ancient form of conveyance by the actual delivery of a piece of the soil and of the timber growing thereon, was doubtless more intelligible to the Indian mind than the drawing a picture of his totem at the bottom of a piece of paper inscribed with "Know all men by these presents," and other ponderous formulas.

Without going more at length into the industries of the men of that day, it is time we gave some attention to the equally laborious occupations of their wives and daughters. Perhaps the best way to illustrate the subject is to take you to the house of a well-to-do farmer and inspect the housekeeping and all the surroundings of its inmates. We will call on the 30th of May, 1712, at the house of Samuel Gridley, which, as I have already mentioned, stood near the site of the house of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq. The date is a little later than I could wish, but our knowledge of the house is better than that of any other. We will examine, not what might have been seen in such a house at that time, but what the appraisers, John Wadsworth, John Porter, and Isaac Cowles, found there that day, and made solemn oath that they found. The

female inmates of the house we are to inspect were the widow Mary and her three daughters, Sarah, a girl of eighteen who afterward married Nathaniel Cowles, Mary, aged four, who died unmarried, and Jerusha, a babe of four months who afterwards married Nehemiah Lewis. We will enter by the porch which opens into the hall, on either side of which are the parlor and kitchen, and back of all the leanto. Over each room except the leanto is a chamber, and over all the garret. In the porch we find much which had reference to out-of-door life, and which the modern housewife would certainly have requested Mr. Gridley to bestow elsewhere,—harnesses, saddles, the pillion, and pillion cloth on which the goodwife rode behind her husband to church or elsewhere, a chest and tools, a cart rope, a steel trap, and sundry other things. Entering the hall we find the furniture to consist of a wainscot chest, a table, a great chair, four lesser ones, three cushions and a pillow. Here are stored the arms which every man must have ready for instant use, his gun, pike, bayonet, rapier, back sword, and cutlass. I think there must have been a fireplace in the room, for we find two heaters, two smoothing irons, a spit, a pair of bellows, two trammels, and their hooks. Here are pots and kettles, large and small, of brass and iron. There is a goodly display of shining pewter, tankards, plates, basins, beakers, porringers, cups with handles, barrel cups, pewter measures of all sizes, and pewter bottles. Here is much wooden ware, earthen ware, and even china ware, and here the family supply of medicines, Matthew's pills, blistering salve, and sundry drugs whose names I must leave for the professional practitioner to transcribe. Here are the goodman's money scales and weights, his spectacles, and his library, a collection of books which would have been called good Sunday reading fifty years ago. They are an old Bible, a psalm book,

and other books entitled "ΚΟΜΕΤΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ, Or a Discourse Concerning Comets; wherein the Nature of Blazing Stars is Enquired into: With an Historical Account of all the Comets which have appeared from the Beginning of the World unto this present Year, 1683, . . . By Increase Mather." "Time and the End of Time," being two discourses by Rev. John Fox of Woburn, Mass., 1701. "Zion in Distress; or the Groans of the Protestant Church;" printed in 1683 for Samuel Phillips. "Spiritual Almanack," "The Unpardonable Sin," "Divine Providence Opened," "Man's chief End to Glorifie God, or Some Brief Sermon — Notes on 1 Cor. 10. 31.— By the Reverend Mr. John Bailey, Sometime Preacher and Prisoner of Christ at Limerick in Ireland, and now Pastor to the Church of Christ in Watertown in New-England." 1689, "Commentary on Faith," "How to Walk with God," "The Wonders of the Invisible World," by Rev. Cotton Mather, a very famous book on witchcraft in Salem and elsewhere, and on the ordinary devices of the devil. It was answered by Robert Calef's "More Wonders of the Invisible World," which was burned by order of Dr. Increase Mather, President of Harvard College, in the college yard. We find also, "Some Account of the Life of Henry Gearing," by J. Shower, "A Warning to prepare for Death," a New Testament, "A Book on Numbers," whether an arithmetic or a commentary on one of the books of the Pentateuch does not appear, "a law book, and several pieces of books." The latter entry seems to show that the library was much read, and even the fragments of books were carefully preserved. From the hall we pass to the kitchen, where we find in the big fireplace a pair of cast-iron fire dogs weighing sixty-four pounds, two pairs of tongs, a peel, two trammels and a jack. The furniture seems scanty, a table, a chest, a truckle bedstead, a great chair and two small ones. Sundry baskets, keel-

ers, tubs, pails, and kettles stand around. The main features of the kitchen, however, are the loom, the great wheel, two linen wheels, a hand reel, and the great piles of linen sheets, pillow bears, table-cloths, towels, and napkins, largely no doubt the production of the loom and wheels, and large supplies of yarn, tow, and flax for further manufacture. Spinning and storing up vast supplies of spotless linen against their wedding day, were the great accomplishments of the young maiden. We read of spinning matches which lasted from early dawn to nine o'clock at night, the contestants being supplied with food by other hands while they worked, and finally with bloody fingers sinking from sheer exhaustion. Spinning bees have continued until within a few years in some rural districts. I remember as late as the fall of 1859, passing, on a by-road near Farmington, Maine, just at sunset, a merry procession of young women with their great wheels carried by young men, on their way to a contest with the spinners of the next village. Let us now inspect the parlor, then as since the crowning glory of the house. We find a bedstead with a feather bed and a great supply of blankets and coverlids, and, hanging over all, a set of calico curtains with a calico vallance to match. A warming-pan, a most useful article in a cold room, completes the sleeping equipment. Other furniture is three chests, a trunk, a round table, a great chair, three little ditto, a joint stool, and five cushions. There is also a cupboard and a carpet for said cupboard. A carpet was not a floor cloth but a covering to furniture often showily embroidered by its owner as a specimen of her skill. Probably a green rug, valued at five shillings, was for the floor. Here are Mr. Gridley's pair of pistols and holster. There now remains down stairs only the leanto, which will not detain us long, though it probably detained Mrs. Gridley many a weary hour, for here are the cheese-press,

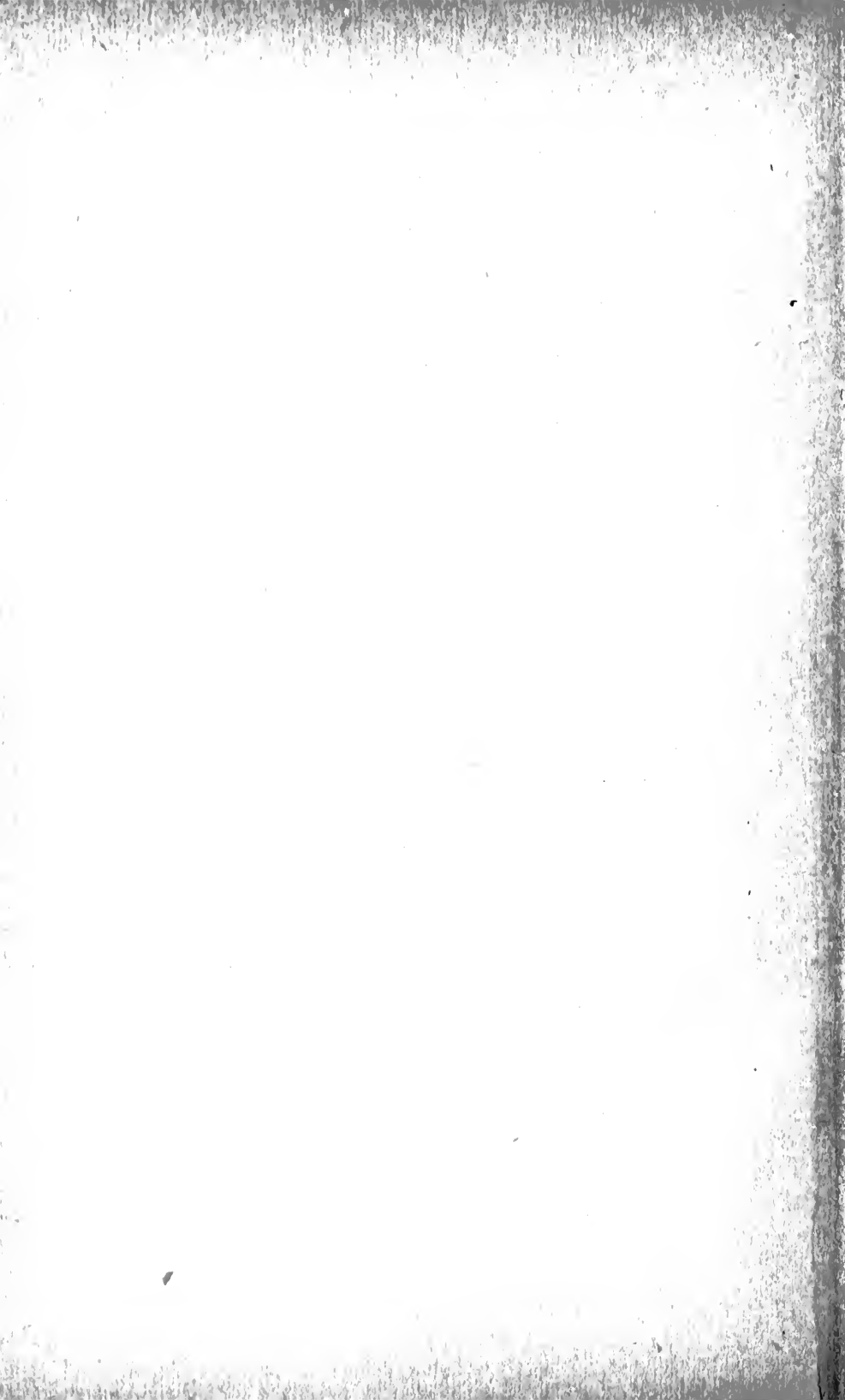
and churn, the butter tubs, and all the machinery of the dairy, and, last of all, an hour-glass with which the various mysteries of the place were timed. This hour-glass is the only instrument for the measurement of time I find, except the watch and clock of Rev. Samuel Hooker. The sun dial answered very well when the sun shone, and a blast on a conch shell when the good wife decreed it to be dinner time, called the village home at noon.

If you please we will now walk up stairs. In the parlor chamber we find a bed with a silk grass pillow and two leather pillows weighing ten pounds, and a goodly supply of blankets, coverlids, curtains, etc. There are a number of chests and boxes and twenty-one pounds of yarn, and there was room left somewhere for Mr. Gridley to store 50 bushels of wheat and 80 of rye, a practice which the tidy housekeeper of to-day might not approve in her best chamber. It was, however, the custom to store grain in the house where it would be under the protection of the household cat, as we see illustrated in the picture books of to-day.

"This is the cat  
That killed the rat  
That ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built."

In the hall chamber we find a feather bed and belongings and a great store of wheat, barley, corn, and peas in baskets, bags, and barrels. The porch chamber is given up to malt, oats, and peas. In the garret are 10 bushels of rye and 100 of indian corn. If you care to inspect the cellar you will find it pretty well filled with barrels of pork, beer, soap, hops, oatmeal, and other family stores. Here we must take leave of Mrs. Gridley and her household treasures, pleased no doubt that our lot has fallen two centuries later, and that seven generations of men have come and gone and left us the better for their hardy industries and honest lives.







THE LIBRARY OF A FARMINGTON VILLAGE BLACKSMITH  
A. D. 1712

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# AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

## Annual Meeting

OF

# THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY

OF

FARMINGTON, CONN.

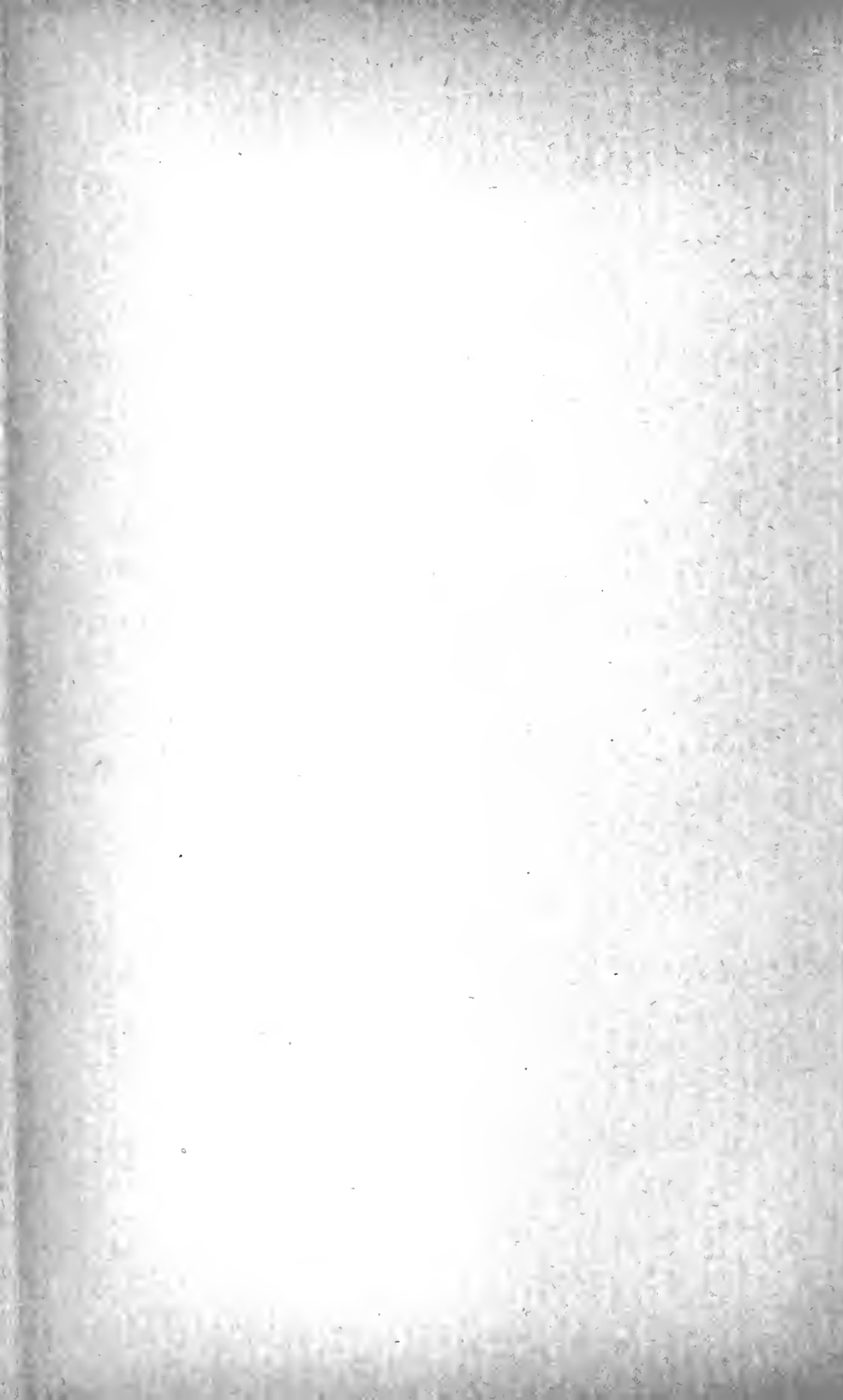
*September 12, 1900*



By JULIUS GAY



HARTFORD PRESS  
The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company  
1900



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## ADDRESS.

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*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of Farmington:*

It has been the custom of the managers of some neighboring libraries to celebrate the passing of each decade of their history. Let us also to-night briefly consider how it has fared with us. Ten years ago the old library, dating from the close of the Revolution, had ceased its usefulness for want of suitable accommodations. Another, known as the Tunxis, the result of enthusiastic and well-directed individual enterprise, had taken its place, and it in turn began to find its usefulness limited by its contracted habitation. Again, the village library, heir of many predecessors, has outgrown its quarters, and we hope that somehow in the march of public improvements a larger and more convenient building, and one separate from all other public uses, may in good time be provided for it.

Ten years ago this library was opened to the public by a goodly company; to-night we are again met, but not all. First among the speakers of that evening to pass over to the majority was Professor Nathan P. Seymour, who came among us every spring with the coming of the birds. To the school he discoursed on Grecian literature, and by us all his familiar conversation was greatly enjoyed, rich with stores of the most genial wisdom. Next passed away President Porter, whose love for his native village was strong and enduring. He was its earliest and best historian, his high position reflecting honor on the home of his youth and of his long line of ancestors. Next to leave us was the Rev. Thomas K. Fessenden, active in all good words and works. Then came Mr. Edward Nor-

ton, one of the founders of the library and useful with advice and assistance as an officer of the company. An active helper in all worthy enterprises, and of great learning in his special department of thought and research, but so modest that few knew of his attainments. Next passed away the beloved minister, Rev. Edward A. Smith, helpful in all good things, judicious in no ordinary degree, loved by all, and the personal friend of many. These were all graduates of Yale and an honor to any station to which their lot called them. Last of all the company of that evening, passed away from the scene of her life-long work, Miss Sarah Porter, the eulogies upon whom from all parts of the world need no repetition here. Her life is known of all men. On that evening a paper was read on the former public libraries of the village. To-night I propose to speak of the private library of a Farmington village blacksmith in 1712, if so small a collection of books can be called a library.

Considering the serious character of Puritan literature, we approach the subject very much as Burns did his Epistle to a young friend, feeling

" Perhaps, it may turn out a sang,  
Perhaps, turn out a sermon."

There is certainly an opportunity for something more solemn than any sermon you have heard of late years. We will, however, endeavor to take as cheerful a view of the subject as it admits. I think it may be interesting for us all to know, not merely what books might have been read in New England in 1712, but what was actually the daily intellectual food of the common people in this very community.

Samuel Gridley, son of Thomas Gridley the immigrant, lived and had his blacksmith shop near the site of the house of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq., now known as the Lodge. He repeatedly held the office of townsman or selectman, and that of constable. I do not know that his collection of books surpassed that of his neighbors, but he had the rare good fortune

of having John Wadsworth write the inventory of his estate. He, instead of valuing the books in a lump, as was usually the custom then as now, gave us the title of each volume. First in order came an "Old great Bible," valued at three shillings. The precise edition we do not know. I have seen the great Bible of only two of the first settlers of this town, that of Newell and of Thomson, and for many reasons believe Mr. Gridley's to have been of the same kind, namely the London Bible of 1598 or of about that date, commonly known to collectors as the "Breeches Bible," from its peculiar rendering of a certain passage in Genesis. It had maps showing the precise location of the Garden of Eden and many curious cuts. It contained also Sternhold and Hopkins' Book of Psalms, "with apt notes to sing them withall." I do not suppose we should enjoy the constant use of this music, but I should be greatly pleased for once to hear a hundred strong voices singing in unison, with all the fervor of their souls, the music set, for instance, to the 68th Psalm. "Let God arise and then his foes will turn themselves to flight." Such were the tunes which carried the Ironsides of Cromwell victorious over many a bloody field. Next on the list appears one Psalm Book, 18 pence. We cannot be sure which one of the three versions of the Psalms in common use was meant. These were Ainsworth's "Book of Psalms Englished both in Prose and Metre," that is, with the prose and meter side by side, so that the worshiper might see how far he was straying from the Bible; Sternhold and Hopkins' "Whole Booke of Psalms," and the famous Bay Psalm Book, the first book printed in New England, a copy of which was bought by Cornelius Vanderbilt at the Brinley sale in 1879 for twelve hundred dollars.

Next we find ΚΟΜΕΤΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ, Or a Discourse Concerning Comets; wherein the Nature of Blazing Stars is Enquired into: With an Historical Account of all the Comets which have appeared from the Beginning of the World unto this present Year.  
 . . . By Increase Mather, Teacher of a Church at Boston

in New England. . . . And sold by J. Browning at the corner of the Prison Lane next the Town House. 1683. This was the only scientific book in Mr. Gridley's collection, but it was a scientific book written by a Puritan divine with a theological intent. This is set forth by the Rev. John Sherman in his introduction to the book. "Comets," he says, "are ordinarily the forerunners of disastrous calamities, mischiefs, and miseries, hastening to follow and fall down on the heads of senseless and secure sinners. . . . If it be said that some of these peri-wigged heralds have appeared on the etherial stage upon a more benign account, it may be rationally replied, that the number of such is very small. . . . When the hand of Heaven is seen writing Mene, Mene, Tekel, etc., it may become the highest of mortals to tremble." The author begins by expressing his regret that he could not at this distance from Europe, in this American wilderness, suddenly obtain the long list of learned works he proceeds to enumerate. The opinions of ancient philosophers from Aristotle down as to the nature of comets, he combats. "The Peripatetic School," he says, "has fancied them to be meteors generated out of the bowels of the Earth, exhaled and extolled by the Sun to the supreme region of the air and there set on fire." He contends that comets are not placed in the first heaven or air, but far above it in the second or starry heaven. After vanquishing the ancients, he enters on his main task, that of setting down the dates of the appearance of great numbers of comets from the beginning of the world to his own day, and, along side of them, the duly corresponding dates of all the dire disasters which history has recorded. We will consider a few of these remarkable coincidences. "In the year after the creation, 1656, there was seen a formidable blazing star, which all the old world beheld for the space of nine and twenty days. . . . Immediately upon its appearing Methuselah died. . . . The next year the flood came, wherein all men, women, and children throughout the earth (excepting eight persons)



perished." "Anno Mundi 1744 there appeared a comet in the sign of Capricorn, which in the space of sixty-five days passed through three of the celestial signs. The building of Babel, confusion of languages, and subsequent dispersion of mankind throughout the world have been noted as events attending that comet. . . . A.M. 2118 a comet was observed in the sign of Aries . . . followed by the famine . . . which caused Abraham to remove into Egypt." He gives the dates and the descriptions, too lengthy for our purpose, of the comets which heralded one after another the Trojan War, the War of the Amazons, the destruction of the Philistines at the death of Samson, Haman's plot to massacre the Jews, the Peloponnesian War, the burning of the temple of Ephesus, the burning of Rome by Nero, the persecution under Diocletian, and the composing of his diabolical religion by Mahomet. As he proceeds to the more precise dates of modern times, the misfit between the comets and the disasters became more apparent, until he was forced to exclaim, "But there must needs be some mistake in that relation, and therefore I intermit it and proceed unto." And he proceeds accordingly. The Star of Bethlehem could not very well be called a herald of evil, so he concludes that it was not a comet, but is ready to believe that the darkness of the crucifixion was caused by a comet interposing itself between the sun and the earth.

The next book enumerated was "Time and the End of Time," by John Fox. Printed in Boston in 1701. This is worthy of a moment's consideration as a good specimen of the form of sermons two centuries ago. The writer divides his subject into five heads: 1stly, When is time to be redeemed; 2dly, What time must be redeemed; 3dly, How time must be redeemed; 4thly, Why time must be redeemed; and 5thly, Motives and Directions to help you. Each of the five heads has from five to seven subdivisions, each of which subdivisions has its application, and each application has six heads called uses, and each use from four to ten motives. I do not

propose to weary you with any rehearsal of the subject matter of the book, for I am too forcibly impressed by the arguments of Mr. Fox against wasting time to be guilty of any such folly. In general we gather that time is most wisely spent in "reading the Word, catechising and prayer," and that it is most deplorably wasted in story-telling, inquiring after news, card-playing, dicing, dancing, stage plays, bear and bull baiting, hunting, hawking, and in reading romantic tales. Especially was he displeased at the waste of precious time by a certain gentlewoman who invited a godly minister to dinner and kept him waiting from ten of the clock till one, all of which time she was dressing.

Next we come upon "Sion in Distress, or the Groans of the Protestant Church," printed in Boston, 1683. This is now one of the extremely rare books of Mr. Gridley's collection, though common enough in his day. The inventory of a Boston bookseller in 1700 showed six copies on his shelves. It is the third edition of what the writer calls "a revived poem with such additions and enlargements as makes it very different from the first impression." That is, he dares to print more fully here than in England, what the Popish or Titus Oates Plot of 1678 had suggested to his heated imagination. He says, "We have now a plain prospect (by the gracious discoveries of Providence) of those horrid and execrable plots, which the restless adversary has contrived against the peace and very being of Sion, and which were much in the dark when my Muse first bewailed its condition." As for the style of his poetry, he informs us that "In a subject of grief a quaint and ornamental method is not to be expected, for an abrupt and sobbing delivery is more natural in the delineation of sorrow than a studied, well-poised and artificial harangue." He accordingly opens his poem with the lines,

"What dismal vapour (in so black a form)  
Is this, that seems to harbinger a storm?"

The poem is a discourse between Sion's Friend, Sion, Sion's Children, Babylon, Jehovah, Beelzebub, and Justice, which soon takes the form of a judicial trial, and the Waldenses, Albigenses, and Protestants of Piedmont, Savoy, Bohemia, and other lands are called in as witnesses. You will doubtless remember in this connection the nobler lines of Milton's sonnet,

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones  
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold:"

Finally the Judge, descending from lofty rhyme to vigorous prose, indicts Rome as the Man of Sin, and also under the various titles usually chosen for her from the Book of Revelation, and finally convicts her of the peculiar sins and abominations most popular at the court of Charles the Second. The next book is entitled "Spiritual Almanac," a title so abbreviated that we cannot discover the book with certainty. On the last page of an almanac for the previous year, 1711, is the advertisement of a book which has the characteristics of what might be looked for in a spiritual almanac. It is a chronological account of the labors of the farm, beginning in the early spring and going on through the year, with religious observations thereon. It is entitled "Husbandry Spiritualized: Or the Heavenly Use of Earthly Things. By John Flavel, late minister of the Gospel." The husbandry is decidedly spiritualized, there being the least possible amount of husbandry that would suffice for a text to a long homily. Nevertheless the book is so superior to much of the literature of the day that I should be tempted to say something more about it if I could be sure that it was the very Spiritual Almanac we are seeking. That Mr. Gridley had an almanac of some sort, spiritual or otherwise, there can be no doubt. Every man, whatever other profession he might have, whether mechanic, or lawyer, or doctor, or minister even, was a farmer, and farming was in a way much more scientific than now. There was a precise time for every labor of the farm, and the almanac, with its information about the positions

of the sun and moon and the signs of the zodiac and its list of saints' days was indispensable. In the book of Ecclesiastes they read: "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. . . . A time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted." What these times were they read in old Tusser's *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* and in the other old English worthies who laid down the time for everything. Cut your hair when the moon is in Leo if you would have it grow like the lion's mane, or in Aries that it may curl like a ram's horn. The labors of the farm are duly set down as follows:

- March 1. Upon St. David's day put oats and barley in the  
clay.
- March 12. Upon St. Vitus' day sow cabbages.
- March 21. On St. Benedict's day sow oats and barley.
- May 1. On St. Philip's and St. James' day sow peas and  
lentils.
- May 25. On St. Urban's day sow flax and hemp.
- June 11. On St. Barnabas' day put the scythe to the grass.
- June 24. Cut your thistles before St. John's, or  
you will have two instead of one.
- July 8. On St. Killian's day sow vetches and rape.
- July 13. On St. Margaret's day put sickle to the corn.
- Sept. 1. On St. Giles' day sow corn.
- Sept. 17. On St. Lambert's day put meat in pickle.
- Sept. 21. On St. Matthew's day shut up the bees.
- Oct. 15. On St. Oswald's day roast geese.
- Oct. 18. On St. Luke's day kill your pigs and bung up  
your barrels.
- Nov. 11. On St. Martin's day make sausages.

And the list ends with the very comfortable injunction, hardly of Puritan origin, Drink wine all the year round, and then you will be ready to die at any time.

The next title is "The Unpardonable Sin." In the catalogues of the many thousand sermons which came from the presses of London and Boston before 1712 it is amazing that not one on this favorite subject of speculation can be found. If any are curious about the effect of this weird subject on the early New England mind, they can find a vivid picture of it in Nathaniel Hawthorne's story of Ethan Brand, who in early life wandered away from his native village in quest of the unpardonable sin, and returned in old age, boasting that he had found the object of his search.

The next book is "The Doctrine of Divine Providence opened and Applied," by Increase Mather, Teacher of a church in Boston in New England. Printed by Richard Pierce for Joseph Brunning, and are to be sold at his shop at the corner of Prison-Lane next the Exchange. 1684. The book opens with the well-known story of the angel who justified the ways-of-God-to-man to a doubting hermit by stealing a cup from one kind host who entertained them, drowning the servant of another, and killing the child of a third. All three seeming crimes the angel satisfactorily explained, and with this introduction Mather goes on to unfold to his readers things hard to be understood, — the Old Testament stories of the bloody extermination of the heathen by the word of the Lord, the destruction of Saul for his pity towards the wretches he was told to slay, and the removal of the American Indians by the plague to make room for the Pilgrim Fathers. All these cases he explains to the honor and glory of the Almighty. Next on the inventory we meet with "Man's chief End to Glorifie God, or Some Brief Sermon Notes. . . . By the Reverend Mr. John Bailey, Sometime Preacher and Prisoner of Christ at Limerick in Ireland, and now Pastor to the Church of Christ in Watertown in New England." It was a farewell sermon to his flock in which he speaks of the power which "thrust me from poor Limerick," and of the time "when I was in prison and my public liberty gone." It is a long lament, more inter-

esting to his dear friends than it can possibly be to us. The next treasure noted in the library was a Commentary on Faith, but I find so many books to which this abbreviated title would be appropriate that we will pass on to the next, which is "How to walk with God, or Early Piety exemplified in the Life and Death of Mr. Nathaniel Mather, who having become at the age of nineteen an instance of more than common Learning and Virtue, changed Earth for Heaven, Oct. 16, 1688." Whereto are added . . . A Walk with God." Samuel Mather, in the opening address to the Reader, writes "am his younger brother and son of Increase Mather, the well-known teacher of a church in Boston and rector of Harvard College in New England." The youthful subject of this memoir lived before the days of athletic exercises for students, spent his days and the larger part of his nights over his books, entered college at the age of twelve, and, before many months, "had accurately gone over all the Old Testament in Hebrew, as well as the New in Greek, besides going through all the Liberal Sciences." His biographer says, "While he thus devoured books, it came to pass that books devoured him. His weak body would not bear the toils and hours, which he used himself unto." The extracts from his diary are a record of pious introspection in which he worked himself up to the usual test of piety, that he was willing to be eternally damned if God so decreed. As for the accompanying discourse, "The Walk of Holy and Happy Men," we have not time this evening for an extended walk with the Mathers, though we need not fear being wearied with any commonplace conversation by the way, for they had always something fresh to talk of and a vigorous way of saying it. Books like this, describing saints who were good, but rarely anything else, are not much in vogue at present. Forty years ago there were a number in our Sunday-school library which had been handed down from generation to generation because they were in such superb condition, and they were in this condition because no one read

them. Famous books they had been in their day,—The Dairyman's Daughter, The Young Cottager, and others. Thackeray continually alludes to such under the title of his supposed tract, "The Washerwoman of Finchley Common." You remember how Becky Sharp thanks Lady Southdown for that precious work "which she had read with the greatest profit," and asked about its gifted author. A youthful saint, or prig, if you choose so to call him, may be an infinitely more useful member of the community than a brute, but most readers now prefer an account of the brute.

The next book on the list was considered by the appraisers to have the highest commercial value of any, and was inventoried at five shillings and four pence. It was certainly the most famous book of that time. "The Wonders of the Invisible World. . . . Published by the special command of his Excellency the Governour of the Massachusetts Bay in New England." This book was written in October, 1692, by the Rev. Cotton Mather at the request of Gov. Sir William Phipps in explanation and justification of the witchcraft trials at Salem. Up to the 22d of September nineteen persons had been hanged and one pressed to death for refusing to plead. The jails of Salem and the surrounding towns were full of the accused, and complaints against the highest persons in the land were beginning to be made. In this book Cotton Mather repeats the great need of caution as to the character of evidence which the ministers of Boston had already urged in their return of June 15th, a due regard to which might have saved all the disgraceful tragedies which followed. Nevertheless it did not occur to Mather, or indeed to any believer in the Word of God before the advent of the higher criticism, that there could be any doubt of the existence of witchcraft. His first proposition is, "That there is a Devil, is a thing doubted by none but such as are under the influence of the Devil. For any to deny the being of a Devil must be from an ignorance or profaneness worse than diabolical." In explanation of the sudden inroad

of witchcraft, he says, "The New Englanders are a people of God settled in those, which were once the Devil's territories; and it may easily be supposed that the Devil was exceedingly disturbed when he perceived such a people here accomplishing the promise made of old. . . . An army of Devils is horribly broke in upon the place which is the center and, after a sort, the first born of our English settlements; and the houses of the good people there are filled with the doleful shrieks of their children and servants tormented by invisible hands, with tortures altogether preternatural." He quotes scriptural authority that the number of evil spirits let loose on a single sufferer is a legion, and informs us "that a legion consisted of twelve thousand five hundred people." To prove the existence and terrible power of witchcraft, and to justify the recent extreme measures for its destruction, he cites numerous instances from all times and lands and concludes with that of Ann Cole of Hartford, the famous "She runs to her rock" case. The picture is a dreary and monotonous one. A single story like that of Goodman Brown dressed up with all the marvelous skill of Hawthorne is attractive reading, but this long list of endless deviltries, repeated over and over again with the same ever recurring incidents, wearies one. They were copied by the wretched children concerned in the delusion, from well-known English cases, without the invention of any new machinery to relieve the monotony. We read of writing in the devil's book with one's own blood, which the devil tells Faust is a very peculiar fluid, of crooked pins as an article of diet, of toads and all manner of reptiles which when thrust in the fire explode and reveal themselves in their true form, some badly signed old beldame, of private marks left by devils on the persons of their victims that they may know their own, and of all the villainous machinery of witchcraft, never rising to the level of the Walpurgis Night in Faust, but more suggestive of a college freshman society initiation of forty years ago. One of the commissioners on his journey to Salem ad-



vised whipping the devil out of the afflicted, a procedure which would probably have ended Salem witchcraft then and there. There is, however, a growing belief among the investigators of the unknown if not the unknowable, that the fraud practiced by a few children does not adequately explain the mystery, and the English Society for Psychical Research in its attempt at a scientific proof of a future life is accumulating a new collection of the Wonders of the Invisible World. In harmony with this line of research comes a hypothesis thrown out by the latest biographer of Cotton Mather. Briefly stated, his notion is, that before man was evolved from the lower forms of animal life, he was possessed of more than the five senses. These have descended to other animals as instincts, and vestiges of them may still appear under abnormal conditions in man, and, surviving from an age void of the normal sense, suggest the delusions which form the stock in trade of the necromancer, the witch, and the medium. However this may be, it is fair to the memory of the men of Salem to quote the language of one of the latest and most thorough students of the delusion, Mr. William Frederick Poole. He says: "No nation, no age, no form of religion or irreligion, may claim an immunity from this superstition. The Reformers were as zealous in the matter as the Catholics. It is estimated that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries two hundred thousand persons were executed, mostly burned, in Europe, Germany furnishing one-half the victims, and England thirty thousand. . . . The Familiar Letters of James Howell, who, after the restoration of Charles II, was Historiographer Royal, gives a frightful picture of the extent of the delusion in England. Under date of February 3, 1646, he writes, 'We have multitudes of witches among us; for in Essex and Suffolk there were above two hundred indicted within these two years, and above the one-half of them executed. I speak it with horror. God guard us from the Devil.' "

The next book on the list is entitled "Some account of the

Holy Life and Death of Mr. Henry Gearing, late citizen of London; Who departed this life January 4th, 1693-4, Aged 61. . . . By John Shower. Boston, 1705." A book so popular that another edition was called for and issued in 1720. Mr. Gearing seems to have been one of the excellent persons classed by Burns as the "unco guid, or the rigidly righteous." He was the son of a mercer in Lechlade in Gloucestershire "of extraordinary prudence and piety," and his relatives are enumerated with much genealogical completeness. There is the usual diary in which the subject enters his daily communings with his soul, but whether for his own profit, or for that of posterity or lest the recording angel should forget, is left to conjecture. The book is dedicated to the widow and children by their afflicted friend and servant in the Gospel John Shower, who tells them "An ordinary Hell will not be punishment enough for the children of such parents if you miscarry, and fall short of Heaven."

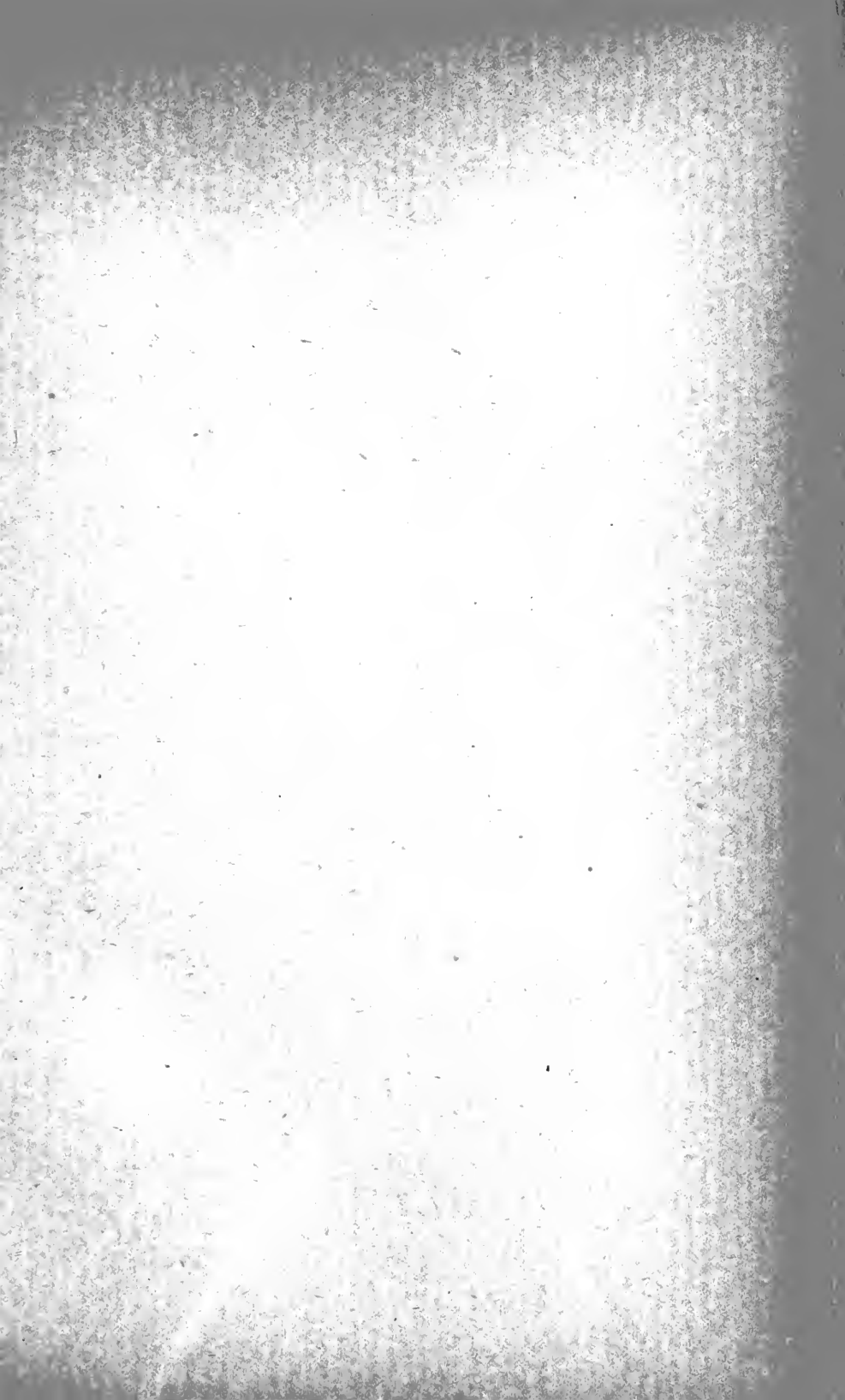
The title of the next book sufficiently indicates its character, the great number read, and one of the curious customs of the times. It is named "The Great Concern; or, A serious warning to a timely and thorough preparation for death, with helps and directions in order thereto. By Edward Pearse. . . . Recommended as proper to be given at funerals. The twenty-second edition. Boston in New England. . . . 1711." Eleven chapters and a last letter. 118 pages. The custom of giving books at funerals as a reminder of the deceased, was much like that also in vogue of distributing funeral rings duly inscribed, and was so common that Judge Sewall used to extend the custom also to weddings and records in his diary gifts of elegantly bound psalm books to the happy pair, accompanying his gifts with much excellent advice.

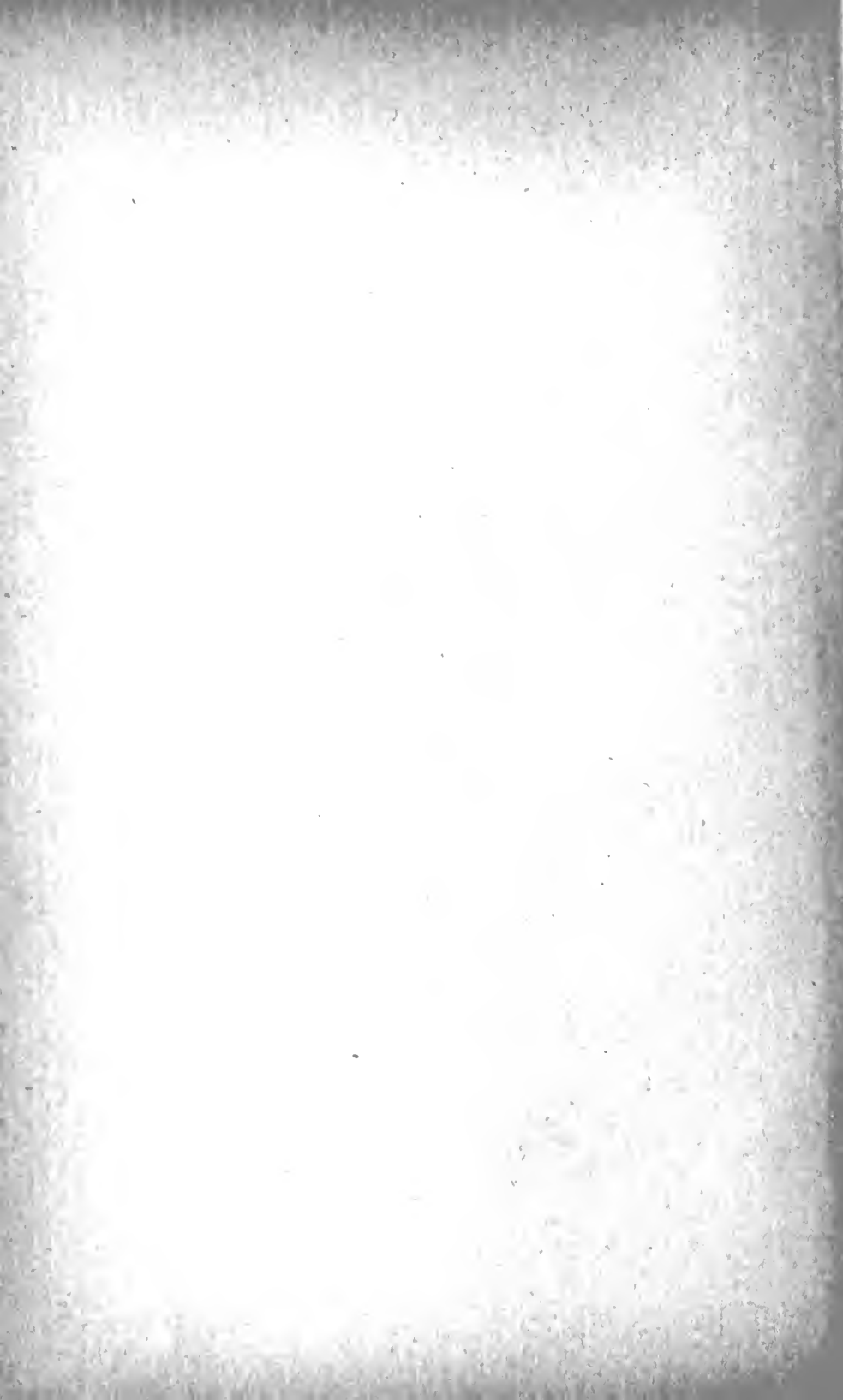
The next book was a copy of the New Testament, and this was followed by "A book on Numbers." There were two commentaries on this book of the Pentateuch in common use at that time, but which was the favorite of Mr. Gridley is not

very important for us to know. Next comes a Law Book. This was without doubt one of the copies of the "Whole body of laws now in force in the colony," which the General Court at its May Session of the previous year ordered printed and distributed by the towns to the several inhabitants, as they shall see cause. With the exception of an entry of 18 pence as the value of several books and pieces of books not named, one more book closes the list. This was a catechism valued at 4 pence, probably the one entitled "A short Catechism drawn out of the Word of God by Samuel Stone, Minister of the Word at Hartford on Connecticut. Boston in New England. Printed by Samuel Green, for John Wadsworth of Farmington. 1684." It must have been written more than twenty years previously, for Mr. Stone died in 1663. The catechism in previous use can be found on our records, and one of our pastors informs us that it was ascribed to Rev. Thomas Hooker, but does not give his authority. Why Deacon Wadsworth so much preferred this compilation as to be at the expense of publishing it, is a matter of conjecture. If a printed book was to be preferred to one in manuscript, the Westminster Shorter Catechism printed in Boston in 1691 might have sufficed, but the worthy men of that day were very precise about their doctrines. Personal friendship for Mr. Stone can hardly account for the preference. Some of his prominent antagonists in the great quarrel in Hartford had removed to Hadley four years before his death, and came thence to this town just before, or during, the Indian atrocities of King Philip's War. Many of our prominent men would not, therefore, have been likely to be personal friends of Mr. Stone. Of this catechism only two copies are known to exist, one bought by the Lenox Library at a cost of one hundred dollars and one by the Watkinson Library at Hartford for sixty dollars. Of the nice shades of difference in the doctrines inculcated in its eighty-one questions and answers, none but a skilled theologian could give an intelligent account, and no audience but one drilled from child-

hood in subtle metaphysical niceties, as our fathers were, need attempt to listen.

Such is a very brief and inadequate account of the library of a village blacksmith of this town in the year 1712, but probably as lengthy as you care for. Let us not think too lightly of the somber taste of its collector. Apart from religious works very few books could be had even in England. Before 1712 Addison and Pope had published almost nothing. The great novelists were yet to appear. The poetry of Dryden and Milton was indeed available and was probably read by our ancestors as much as by us. Dramatic literature was almost the only secular kind obtainable, but the New Englander had not yet learned to distinguish between the plays of Shakespeare and those which pleased the licentious court of the merry monarch. The first settlers and their children after them were moreover too much occupied with turning the forest into fertile fields, defending their homes from the torch of the savage and organizing expeditions against their northern neighbors, who urged the savages on, to have much time for literary culture. Let us not criticise them too sharply, but rather be grateful for their lives of self-denial which made our larger store of knowledge possible.





THE TUNXIS INDIANS

AN HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

Annual Meeting

OF

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY

OF

FARMINGTON, CONN.

*September 11, 1901*

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By JULIUS GAY

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HARTFORD PRESS  
The Case, Lockwood & Brainard Company

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## ADDRESS.

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THE Tunxis Indians, who once occupied the broad meadows and forests surrounding our village, first came within the range of our ancestors' knowledge about the year 1640. Already in January, 1639, the inhabitants of the three river towns, in the westward march of empire, before they were hardly settled on the Connecticut, moved the court for some enlargement of their accommodations. A committee was therefore appointed to "view those parts by Vnxus Sepus which may be suitable for those purposes and make report of their doings to the court which is adjourned for that end to the 20th of February at 10 of the clock in the morning." The depth of a New England winter did not prove an attractive time for exploring an unknown forest buried beneath the snow, and when the court was duly opened it was informed that "our neighbors of Wethersfield, in regard the weather hath not hitherto suited for the viewing of Vnxus Sepus, . . . intimated their willingness to defer the issue of the business." In December, 1645, the court "ordered that the Plantation called Tunxis shall be called Farmington." So in the year 1645 the settlement had been made long enough to be called a plantation, and two years earlier, in 1643, Stephen Hart had recorded the purchase of land on the west side of the river from a previous owner.

The place was known as Tunxis Sepus, Tunxis signifying crooked and Sepus a river, or the little river, in distinction from the "Great River, the river of Connecticut." Dr. Trumbull translates the name as meaning "at the bend of the

little river," for here the Farmington River turns abruptly northward and finds its way to the Connecticut at Windsor.

In 1642 we read of a grand conspiracy of the Narraganset Indians and of the tribes living at Hartford and Middletown, and the General Court ordered preparations to be made "to defeat the plot of the Indians meeting about Tunxis." We hear nothing further of the plot, and on the 9th of April, 1650, the Indians of this vicinity execute a deed described as "A discovery in writing of such agreements as were made by the magistrates with the Indians of Tunxis Sepus concerning the lands and such things in reference thereto as tend to settle peace in a way of truth and righteousness betwixt the English and them." It states that it is "taken for granted that the magistrates bought the whole country, to the Mohawk country, of Sequasson, the chief sachem." The document then proceeds in a rambling, incoherent manner to stipulate that the Indians should surrender their land, reserving the "ground in place together compassed about with a creek and trees and now also to be staked out, also one little slipe which is also to be staked out." The English were to plough up the land for the Indians, who were allowed to cut wood for fuel. Fishing, fowling, and hunting were to be enjoyed by the English and Indians alike. The deed was signed by Gov. Haynes on the part of the English and by Pethus and Ahamo on the part of the Indians. The consideration was the protection afforded the Indians and the lucrative trade offered them in corn and furs. Nor was the consideration a small one. Before the coming of the English the tribe was between two hostile and powerful enemies, the Pequots on the east and the Mohawks on the west. The brilliant campaign of Captain John Mason had indeed relieved them from the former, but from the Mohawks they were still wont to run in abject terror to the houses of their new friends. The signatures of Pethus and Ahamo to the deed are bits of picture writing not easily explainable. In-

dian signatures are often uncouth representations of their totems; that is, of the animals after which the clan, and sometimes the individual, was named. Pethus' signature is a mere scrawl, but Ahamo's elaborate drawing resembles nothing "in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth." We must remember, however, that the record is only a copy of the original deed transcribed January 18, 1667, by William Lewis Register, who may not have sufficiently admired Indian art and heraldry to have taken much pains with his copy.

The deed of 1650 remained in force twenty-three years, but all compacts, whether in the nature of treaties like that of Clayton and Bulwer, or of constitutions like that of Connecticut, do in time cease to meet all the requirements of new conditions. In 1673, the Indians having become dissatisfied, the town "gave them a meeting by a committee wherein they came to a friendly and final conclusion." The Indians released their right to a rectangular piece of land drawn out in diagram upon the deed that they might see definitely what they conveyed. The piece measured five miles north from Wepansock or Round Hill, three miles to the east, ten miles to the south, and eight miles to the west. "The town of Farmington freely giving to the Indians aforesaid two hundred acres of upland within the lands of their plantation, as also three pounds in other pay." In a postscript (so called) to this deed the Indians are confirmed in their possession of land in the Indian Neck. This deed was signed by twenty-one Indians and by five of their squaws. Squaws often signed deeds with their husbands. They might be treated by them worse than beasts of burden; nevertheless, if descended from sachems or sagamores, their right in the body politic and that of their children was respected. The salic law of old world nations did not hold with them. According to Parkman, among the Iroquois, the royal line followed the totem down the female line. If a Wolf warrior married a

Hawk squaw, the children were Hawks and not Wolves, and a reputed son of the chief was sometimes set aside for the children of a sister, for a sister must necessarily be his kindred, and of the line royal.

Eight years afterward, Mescopce executes another deed confirming that of 1673, and again in 1683, becoming dissatisfied with these not very well understood legal documents, takes the town authorities with him, and in a businesslike manner goes to the southern limit of the grant, marks a tree and builds a monument. In like manner he defines the eastern and western bounds, so that all men could see and understand, and then goes home and signs his heraldic device, a bow and arrow, to a long account of his day's work. His son Sassenakum, "in the presence and by the help of his father," adds his device, which may represent the sun with its surrounding halo. The document was duly recorded and is the last deed we need consider. Peace was firmly established, and with few exceptions the relations between the whites and Indians were from first to last friendly. For an account of one sad exception we must go back a little. John Hull, mint master of Boston, in his diary under date of April 23, 1657, says: "We received letters from Hartford, and . . . heard that at a town called Farmington, near Hartford, an Indian was so bold as to kill an English woman great with child, and likewise her maid, and sorely wounded a little child—all within their house—and then fired the house, which also fired some other barns or houses. The Indians, being apprehended, delivered up the murderer, who was brought to Hartford and (after he had his right hand cut off) was, with an axe, knocked on the head by the executioner." This story is worth a little study as illustrative of the manner in which much grave history is evolved. Given a few facts many years apart, a few traditions and a lively imagination and there results a story that shall go down through all time as authentic as the exploits of Old Testament heroes. Let us

consider the facts and then the story. The General Court in April, 1657, takes notice of "a most horrid murder committed by some Indians at Farmington, and though Mesapano seems to be the principal actor, yet the accessories are not yet clearly discovered." Messengers were sent to the Norwotuck and the Pocumtuck Indians, that is, to those of Hadley and Deerfield, to deliver up Mesapano, which would suggest that those Indians rather than the Tunxis tribe were the guilty parties. The latter, however, had been duly warned against entertaining hostile Indians and were therefore held responsible for the murder and the firing of a house, and they "mutually agreed and obliged themselves to pay unto the General Court in October, or to their order, yearly, for the term of seven years, the full sum of eighty fathoms of wampum, well strung and merchantable." Nearly ten years afterward the house of John Hart takes fire one December night and all his family, save one son who was absent, were burned. We have several contemporary records of the disaster, but no suspicion of foul play appeared. Putting together these stories separated by ten years of time we have full materials for the historic tale. The Indians surround the house of John Hart at midnight, murder the entire family, and burn the house over their remains. The town records perish in the flames, and the tribe pay a fine of eighty fathoms of wampum yearly thereafter. In point of fact the Indians did not murder John Hart or burn his house. No records were destroyed, and the court complained that the Indians did not pay the fine for their transgression of ten years before. The murder of 1657 was probably the work of strange Indians and not of the friendly Tunxis tribe. The Indians living to the north within the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Colony were for many years a menace to the whites and friendly Indians alike. There is a well-known tradition that about the year 1657 a marauding party from the north, seeking captives to hold for ransom, appeared at

the Hart farm, one mile north of the present south line of Avon, and, proceeding thence southward, murdered a Mr. Scott at a place thenceforth known as Scott's Swamp. The earliest record of the tradition is that by Mr. Ezekiel Cowles, father of the late Egbert Cowles, Esq., which I give in his own words. He says: "Two Indians came to Old Farm, where a man by the name of Hart was hoeing corn. He had a gun. He would hoe along a little way and then move his gun a little, and then hoe again. He also had two dogs. The dogs were disturbed by the Indians and would run towards the woods. A partridge flew upon a tree near where he was hoeing. He shot at it and then loaded his gun before he moved. The Indians concluded they could not get him and went on upon the mountain until they came near the south part of the village and got something to eat, but found too many houses to attempt to take any prisoners. Went on. Saw Root's house on Great Plain. He was at prayers. The Indians heard him; thought there were many persons in the house. Dogs barked. They ran. Found Scott alone. Took him. He resisted. Halloed. They cut out his tongue and finally killed him." This atrocity also is attributed to stranger Indians. The differences between the whites and the Tuxis tribe during this period were comparatively slight and appear mostly in the records of fines imposed on the whites for selling cider and strong drink to the Indians, and on the Indians for the consequences which naturally followed. The cases were all petty and a single example will sufficiently illustrate their nature. In 1654 "Papaqurrote is adjudged to pay unto Jackstraw six fathoms of wampum for his injurious pulling of his hair from his head by the roots." Now, if the Indians indulged in such an irregular form of scalping as this, and the injured party appealed to a Yankee justice of the peace for redress, it would seem that their savagery was beginning to take on a rather mild form.



Until the year 1658 the tribe lived mostly on the east side of the river, where they buried their dead and where they maintained a fort. Hither came strange Indians, sometimes as friends and sometimes as foes, until the court found it necessary to order "that notice shall be given to the Indians living at Farmington that in regard of their hostile pursuits, contrary to former orders of court, and considering their entertainment of strange Indians, contrary to the agreement with the English when they sat down in Farmington, whence ensues danger to the English by bullets shot into the town in their skirmishes, that they shall speedily provide another place for their habitation and desert that place wherein they are now garrisoned." In the year 1711, and perhaps earlier, a certain piece of land was known in the town records as Fort Lot, and it retained the name until it was absorbed into the golf grounds of the Country Club. It is the part bounded west by the bed of the old canal and north by land recently of Mr. Henry C. Rice. Here were formerly ploughed up in great numbers two kinds of Indian arrow heads, the broad, black kind used by the Tunxis Indians, and a lesser number of a kind narrower, more pointed, and of a lighter color. These latter we were told were the weapons of a hostile tribe left here after a great battle. Of this battle, Deacon Elijah Porter has left us an account based on the traditions of a hundred years ago. He says the whites "made an agreement with them to remove to the west side of the meadow, but before they left their old settlement they had intelligence that the Stockbridge Indians were preparing to come and try their strength with the Tunxis tribe. They met accordingly at what is called the Little Meadow. The battle was fought with true Indian courage and was very bloody, but the Stockbridge Indians were too powerful for the Tunxis, and they gave way and retreated to their settlement, whereupon the squaws formed a battalion and, attacking the enemy on their flank, soon drove them from the field and gained a complete

victory. The Indians, soon after the battle, made preparation to remove to the west side of the meadow." The removal of the Indians ordered by the General Court in 1658 was probably soon accomplished, for as early as 1662 the high ground west of Pequabuc meadow was known on the town records as Fort Hill, where may still be seen the grave-stones which marked the new place of Indian burials. In 1675 the Court admitted that they had "set their wigwams where the authority appoints."

During the whole of King Philip's war in 1675 and 1676, when the towns around us suffered the horrors of Indian warfare, the Tunxis tribe remained faithful to the English, and on the 6th of October, 1675, sent six of their warriors to assist them at Springfield. They were Nesehegan, Wanawmesse, Woewassa, Sepoose, Unckhepassum, and Unckcowott. In the year 1682 we get a passing glimpse of the relations of the whites and Indians from a single leaf of the account book of Deacon Thomas Bull, in which he recorded his dealings with the Indians. Deacon Bull lived on the east side of the road which diverges from Main Street a little south of the Congregational Church. To Cherry he sells two hoes for which he was to receive five and one-half bushels of corn at harvest time. For one broad hoe John Indian promises a buckskin well dressed and duly pays the same. To Taphow he loaned one bushel of grain and got back one-half bushel. He sells Arwous a hatchet to hunt with, for which he was to receive nine pounds of tallow. From Mintoo he received ten pounds of tallow for a hunting hatchet, four more for mending his gun, and another four for a half bushel of corn. He has accounts also with Wonomie, Judas, and others for sales and repairs of axes, bush scythes, guns, gunlocks, hoes, picks, knives, hatchets, etc. Implements for hunting seem to have been most in demand and were paid for from the proceeds of the hunt. They bought some seed corn and hoes, and it is to be hoped made

good use of them, but the picture of Indian agriculture given by Wood in his "New England's Prospect" is the more commonly received one. Describing the occupations of the squaws, he says "another work is their planting of corn, wherein they exceed our English husbandmen, keeping it so clear with their clamshell hoes, as if it were a garden rather than a corn field, not suffering a choking weed to advance his audacious head above their infant corn, or an undermining worm to spoil his spurnes. Their corn being ripe, they gather it, and, drying it hard in the sun, convey it to their barns, which be great holes digged in the ground in form of a brass pot, ceiled with rinds of trees, wherein they put their corn, covering it from the inquisitive search of their gormandizing husbands, who would eat up both their allowed portion, and reserved feed, if they knew where to find it."

Six years later, in 1688, Pethus and Ahamo had departed this life for the happy hunting grounds of their race, and no one reigned in their stead. Under the mild protection of the English the tribe no longer needed chieftains to lead them to battle, and the love of office for its petty spoils and dignity, involving the sacrifice of self respect and worldly goods for its attainment, did not appeal to their simple natures. Nevertheless, it was desirable that some of their race should have authority to agree with the English in the settlement of controversies. A meeting of the tribe was therefore held on the 17th of September, 1688, at the house of John Wadsworth, and they were asked, now that their chief men were dead, whom they would make choice of to be chief. They very modestly "desired Mr. Wadsworth to nominate a man or two, who did nominate Wawawis and Shum, and all that were present well approved of them" . . . "as captains to whom the English may have recourse at all times." The record of the meeting was signed by John Wadsworth, William Lewis Senior, and John Standly Senior as witnesses on the part of the English, and by Nonsbash, Judas, and eleven

others on the part of the tribe. Wawawis and Shum, on their part, "accepted of the place of captains or chief men amongst all the Indians now in our town and do promise to carry quietly and peaceably towards all English and to give an account to Mr. Wadsworth of any strange Indians coming," etc. Twelve others, "not being Tunxis Indians," also signed an agreement "to walk peaceably and quietly towards the English . . . and to be subject to Shum and Wawawis as their chief commanders." This agreement seems to have been faithfully kept. In 1725, an attack from Canada being feared and bands of hostile Indians having been found lurking about Litchfield, the Governor and Council resolved "That John Hooker, Esq., William Wadsworth, and Isaac Cowles, or any two of them, shall inspect the Indians of Farmington; and the said Indians, each and every man of them, is ordered to appear before said committee every day about sundown, at such place as said committee shall appoint, and give to said committee an account of their ramble and business the preceeding day, unless said committee shall, for good reason to them shown, give their allowance to omit their appearance for some time." In October this restraint was removed from the Farmington Indians provided they refrained from war paint and wore a white cloth on their heads when they went into the woods to hunt, thus distinguishing themselves from the hostile Indians around them.

The conversion of the natives of this continent to Christianity was a favorite purpose set forth in the grants and charters issued by European sovereigns, whether Protestant or Catholic. In 1706 the General Assembly of Connecticut desires the reverend ministers to prepare a plan for their conversion, and in 1717 the Governor and Council are ordered to present "the business of gospeling the Indians" to the October session of the assembly. In 1727 persons having Indian children in their families are ordered to endeavor to teach them to read English and to catechise them. In 1733

the General Assembly provides for the payment of the board of the Indian youth of Farmington at a school under the supervision of Rev. Samuel Whitman, and the next year the latter reports progress to Gov. Talcott. "I have leisure only to inform your Honour that of the nine Indian lads that were kept at school last winter, three can read well in a testament, three currently in a psalter, and three are in their primers. Testaments and psalters have been provided for those that read in them, Three of ye Indian lads are entered in writing and one begins to write a legible hand." Appropriations for the school were made by the assembly for three successive years. In 1737 a pupil of the school, one John Matawan, became its teacher. In 1751 the tribe had made such progress in adopting the customs of their white neighbors that the Ecclesiastical Society "granted a liberty to the Christianized Indians belonging to said society to build a seat in the gallery in the Meeting House over the stairs at the north-east corner of said house and to be done at the direction of the society committee." In 1763 Solomon Mossuck joins the church, and two years afterward his wife Eunice also joins. In November, 1772, a new teacher took his place in the little Indian schoolhouse in West District. This was Joseph Johnson, a Mohegan Indian, whose father had been a soldier in the French war. He had attended Wheelock's Indian Charity School at Lebanon in 1758, but after leaving it had led an irregular life, at one time going on a whaling voyage and visiting the West Indies. Returning to a sober, religious life, he was employed by the "Society for Propagating the Gospel in New England" to teach the Tunxis Indians until he was ordained as a minister at Hanover, New Hampshire, in the summer of 1774. He had much to do with the subsequent removal of the tribe to the west.

The continued progress of the Indians toward a civilized life and their feelings and aspirations in regard to it are set forth in the memorial of Elijah Wampey, Solomon Mossuck,

and the rest of the tribe to the May session of the General Assembly in 1774. "Your Honour's Memorialists have always lived and inhabited in the said town of Farmington by means whereof the most of us have in some measure become acquainted with and formed some general ideas of the English custom and manners, and many of said tribe have been instructed in reading and writing in English, and have been at considerable expense in attaining the same, and furnishing ourselves with bibles and some other books in English for our further instruction though poorly able to bear the expense thereof, and we being desirous to make further proficiency in English literature and especially to be acquainted with the Statute Laws of this Colony . . . do therefore pray your Honours to give us a Colony Law Book to guide and direct us in our conduct." The petition was granted.

Another memorial by the same persons, dated six days earlier, foreshadows a great change about to come over the tribe. The restless spirit of the savage which no civilizing influences, or religion itself, could wholly subdue, had been set on fire by the allurements of new scenes offered them and of more room for the exercise of their old-time freedom of forest life. The memorial states "that they have received a kind invitation from their brethren, the Six Nations at Oneida, to come and dwell with them, with a promise of a cordial reception and ample provision in land whereon to subsist, and being straightened where we now dwell, think it will be best for ourselves and our children and also tend to extend and advance the kingdom of Christ among the heathen nations to sell our interest in this Colony, to accept said kind invitation of our brethren and to remove to the Oneida, and to prevent being imposed upon therein, we humbly pray your Honours as our fathers and guardians to appoint Col. John Strong and Fisher Gay, Esq., and Mr. Elnathan Gridley, all of said Farmington, a committee to assist, direct, and oversee us in the sale of our lands." Their petition was granted.

We have another account of this invitation of the Tunxis tribe to the home of their former deadliest enemies. It was written down by Deacon Elijah Porter, who was a boy of thirteen at the time of the occurrence and doubtless wrote of what he personally knew. He says: "Some time before the Revolutionary War a tribe of the Oneida Indians came to Farmington to make the Tunxes a friendly visit. Accordingly they had a feast of wild deer. In the evening they held a pow-wow. They built a very large fire and the two tribes joined hands and set to a running around this fire singing and shouting and sounding the war whoop so loud as to be plainly heard a mile."

The great obstacle to the removal of the tribe was their claim to valuable lands which they could neither take with them nor legally sell. Since the year 1738 they had many times besought the assistance of the General Assembly and that body by sundry committees had found them to be the rightful owners of a piece of land known as the Indian Neck, containing from ninety to one hundred and forty acres, bounded east and south by the river, north by the Wells Farm, and west by land of Daniel Lewis. This land, though not held in severalty, certain individuals of the tribe had attempted to sell in small quantities by deeds in most instances not legally executed or recorded and dating back as far as the first day of December, 1702. Many legislatures perplexed themselves with attempts to do justice to all parties, until at length a committee was appointed in 1773, which, taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case, divided a particular holding to each Indian, whether warrior or squaw, in quantity varying from ten acres to a little less than two acres and made a map of the same. Lots were laid out to thirty-seven individuals, being one more than the census of 1774 records. According to the latter there were fourteen males over twenty years of age and twelve females. The whole matter was accomplished in 1777, and the tribe was

free to remove with the proceeds of the sale of their lands. The tribe, small as it was, seems not to have made its exodus in a body. In October, 1773, their principal men sent a circular letter to six other New England tribes asking them to send each a messenger to the house of Sir William Johnson, who had encouraged their removal. Joseph Johnson and Elijah Wampey were the only men who went. At a meeting at Canajoharie the next January, representatives were sent by four tribes who announced their intended removal in a speech by Joseph Johnson in the council house of the Oneidas. The latter, in their reply, say: "Brethren, since we have received you as brothers, we shall not confine you, or pen you up to ten miles square," and add many expressions of hearty welcome. The spring of 1775 saw the departure of a considerable part of the Tunxis tribe, some to Oneida and some to Stockbridge. In the Indian deeds on record, Elijah Wampey locates himself in 1777 as "now of Oneida in the Mohawk country," and James Wowowas in 1775 as of Stockbridge. The time of their removal was most unfortunate. They, with most of the Oneidas, espoused the patriot side in the Revolution and were driven in 1777 from their new homes by the British, Tories, and Indians under St. Leger and sought refuge in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. To tell the story of their disaster at length were to rehearse a large part of the history of the Revolution. The war over, they renew their memorials to our state legislature to help them return to their now devastated homes.

Their appeal to the October session of the General Assembly in 1780 was written by Wampey, Cusk, Curcomb, and others from West Stockbridge asking for funds to pay for the preaching among them of "Daniel Simon of the Narraganset tribe of Indians of College education and ordained to preach the gospel." Their request, though fortified by an appeal from the missionary Samuel Kirkland, was refused, and instead thereof they were allowed to solicit contributions



in the several churches. A considerable sum was thus collected in Continental currency and in bills of credit issued by the state, but so utterly valueless had this currency become that "not worth a continental" was the common designation of anything absolutely worthless. The assembly this time took pity on their condition and ordered the state treasurer to take up the bills and pay lawful money to Rev. Samuel Kirkland for their use.

In 1788 the Indians began to return to their Oneida homes, being encouraged by an act of the New York legislature which has the following preamble: "And whereas the Oneida and Tuscarora tribes inhabiting within this state have been distinguished for their attachment to the cause of America and have thereby entitled themselves to protection, and the said tribes by their humble petition having prayed that their land may be secured to them by authority of the legislature," commissioners were appointed to devise measures for their contentment. In an act of 1801 we read "that the tract of land of six miles square confirmed by the Oneida Indians to the Stockbridge Indians by the treaty held at Fort Stanwix in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight shall be and remain to the Stockbridge Indians and their posterity forever." . . . "and be it further enacted that the tract of land heretofore set apart for the Indians called the New England Indians, consisting of the tribes called the Mohegan, Montock, Stonington, and Narraganset Indians, and the Pequots of Groton and Nehanticks of Farmington, shall be and remain to the said Indians and their posterity, but without any power of alienation by the said Indians, or of leasing or disposing of the same or any part thereof, and the same tract shall be called Brothertown and shall be deemed part of the town of Paris in the county of Oneida." Brothertown was on the Oriskany and occupied the greater part of the town of Marshall, which was formerly a part of the town of Paris and the southern part of Kirkland

in which is located Hamilton College. New Stockbridge was six miles to the west in the town of Augusta. The two settlements formed at first one parish, the Rev. Samson Oocom preaching alternate Sundays, now in the barn of Fowler in Brothertown and now in some house in New Stockbridge. The history of these two settlements, of their contentions with the land-hungry whites, and of their own internal dissensions, is too voluminous for our present consideration. In 1831 they again began a new removal westward, this time to Green Bay, Wisconsin. The amount of Tmxis blood diffused through that conglomeration of races must now have become so small that we will not pursue the history of the tribe further. Those who desire further knowledge of the Brothertown Indians should consult the account of Rev. Samson Oocom by the Rev. William Deloss Love and the numerous authorities to which he refers. I shall only quote a few lines from the account which President Dwight gives of his visit to them in 1799. He says: "I had a strong inclination to see civilized Indian life, *i. e.*, Indian life in the most advanced state of civilization in which it is found in this country, and was informed that it might probably be seen here." The Brothertown Indians, he says, "were chiefly residents in Montville and Farmington, and were in number about one hundred and fifty. The settlement is formed on the declivity of a hill, running from north to south. The land is excellent, and the spot in every respect well chosen. Here forty families of these people have fixed themselves in the business of agriculture. They have cleared the ground on both sides of the road about a quarter of a mile in breadth and about four miles in length. Three of them have framed houses. . . . The remaining houses are of logs, and differ little from those of the whites, when formed of the same materials. Their husbandry is much inferior to that of the white people. Their fences are indifferent and their meadows and arable grounds are imperfectly

cleared. Indeed, almost everywhere is visible that slack hand, that disposition to leave everything unfinished, which peculiarly characterizes such Indians as have left the savage life."

We will close this paper with a brief account of the scanty remnant of the Tunxis tribe who lived and died on their ancestral soil. Solomon Mossuck, who joined the church in 1763, died January 25, 1802, at the age of 78 and was buried in the Indian burying ground on the hill to the left of the road as you go to the railroad station. A well-executed monument marks his grave. He had a son Daniel who was a soldier in the Revolutionary War and a son Luke who removed to Brothertown. Thomas Curcomb, who is said on the church records to have been the last Tunxis Indian of unmixed blood, died December 21, 1820, aged 44. He is best remembered by the story of his buying rum at the store of Zenas Cowles, the nearest source of supply for the inhabitants of the Indian Neck. It was during the early days when total abstinence societies were unknown and all classes and conditions of men bought rum, and every merchant sold it, as one of the absolute necessities of life. Thomas, having obtained a gallon for eight shillings, in due time returned for another supply and was disgusted to learn that the price in the meantime had risen to nine shillings. It was explained to him that the extra shilling was for interest on the money and for shrinkage of the liquor, and that it cost as much to keep a hogshead of rum through the winter as to keep a horse. Yes, yes, said the Indian. He no eat hay, but he drink much water. Thomas got his rum for eight shillings as before. The story of Henry Mossuck, son of Luke and grandson of Solomon, is not edifying, but as he was the last of his race and as his career well illustrates the inevitable fate of weaker races in the contest of life I must venture to give you a brief sketch of a man sinning somewhat, but very much sinned against. His first recorded appearance in public was

in a justice court, where Esquire Horace Cowles fined him for stealing chickens on the night of July 8, 1824. A month afterward he was wanted in another matter but had absconded to parts unknown. Two years later he goes to sea for a three years' voyage, and, as I am told, with Capt. Ebenezer Mix, giving a white neighbor a power of attorney to take care of his land in his absence. Just before he returned, his trusted agent sold the land, pocketed the proceeds, and went west. Passing over twenty years of his uneventful life we find him at the age of forty-nine in Colebrook, where on a Saturday night in the last week of March, 1850, two wretches not twenty-one years of age, William H. Calhoun and Benjamin Balcom, murdered a certain Barnice White in a most brutal manner. They were sentenced to be hung, and Henry Mossuck, known as Henry Manasseth, was sentenced with them as having prompted and abetted them. A year afterward the sentences of all three were commuted to imprisonment for life. I have read the lengthy records of the court and the minute confession of Calhoun and have learned much from other sources. There seems to have been no evidence whatever against Mossuck except that of the men, who rehearsed the story of their brutal crime with no more compunction than they would feel at the butchering of an ox, and who had every motive for lying. Mossuck vainly petitioned the legislature for release for three successive years, in 1861, 1862, and 1863, but finally, in 1867, Balcom on his death bed having asserted the innocence of Mossuck, and the chaplain and officers of the State Prison giving him a good character, he was pardoned. He died in our poorhouse on the 10th of October, 1883.

So came to an ignoble end a race always friendly to our fathers. They have left little to recall them to mind. A few monuments mark their graves on Fort Hill near by where John Mattawan and Joseph Johnson taught their schools. A single stone in our own cemetery overlooks the river once

covered with their canoes and the broad acres once their hunting grounds. On it are inscribed the well-known lines by Mrs. Sigourney:

Chieftains of a vanished race,  
 In your ancient burial place,  
 By your father's ashes blest,  
 Now in peace securely rest.  
 Since on life you looked your last,  
 Changes o'er your land have passed;  
 Strangers came with iron sway,  
 And your tribes have passed away.  
 But your fate shall cherished be,  
 In the stranger's memory;  
 Virtue long her watch shall keep,  
 Where the red-men's ashes sleep.

More enduring than these frail memorials are the few Indian words of liquid sound which remain forever attached to the places where the red man lived: Pequabuck, the clear, open pond; Quinnipiack, the long-water land; and Tuxis Sepus, by the bend of the river.













❁ ❁ ❁ The Swarming of the Hile ❁ ❁ ❁

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AN  
HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

Annual Meeting

OF

THE VILLAGE LIBRARY COMPANY

OF

FARMINGTON, CONN.

*September 9, 1903*

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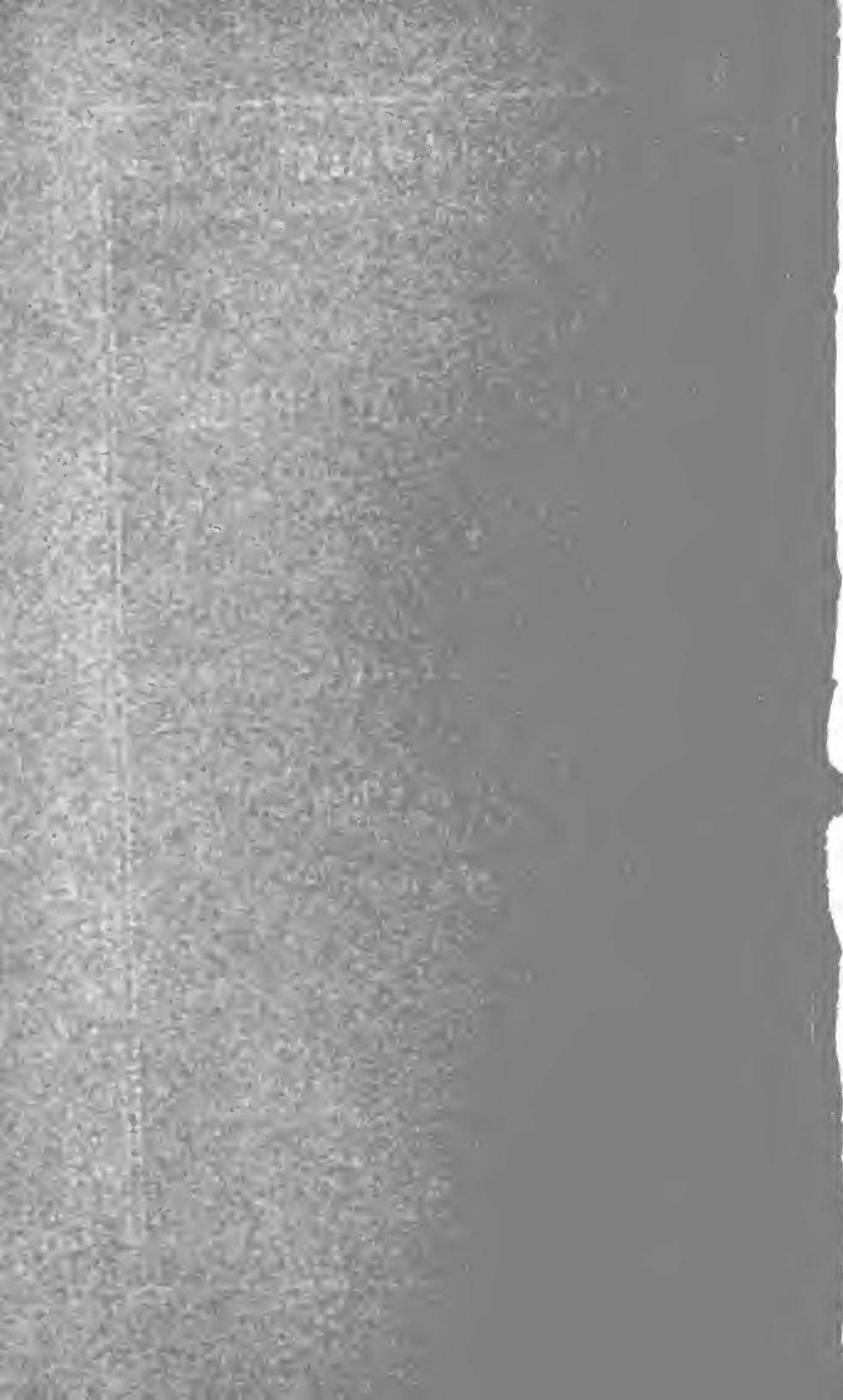
By JULIUS GAY

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Hartford Press

THE CASE, LOCKWOOD & BRAINARD COMPANY

1903



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## ADDRESS.

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*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of Farmington :*

I propose this evening to speak of some of the divisions and migrations of our early New England ancestors which led to the settlement of Farmington, and how new divisions in their turn drove new colonies one by one from the old hive. Want of room for their flocks and herds and tales of fertile fields somewhere just beyond them were not the only causes of unrest. Back of all were the more potent internal dissensions which drove them forth. The Hebrews of old would have preferred the flesh-pots of Egypt to the glories of the promised land. It is the trouble within that causes the swarming of the hive.

The first New England concourse with which we of this village are interested by descent was that at Newton, now Cambridge, gathered around the Rev. Thomas Hooker as pastor, and Rev. Samuel Stone as teacher, appointed to their respective offices at a fast, October 11, 1633. Wood in his *New England's Prospect* printed the next year says: "This is one of the neatest and best compacted Townes in New England, having many Faire structures, with many handsome contrived streets. The inhabitants most of them are very rich, and well stored with Cattell of all sorts; having many Acres of ground paied in with one generall fence." Nevertheless on the 15th of May, 1634, we read that "Those of Newton complained of straitness for want of land, especially meadow, and desired leave of the court to look out either for enlargement or removal." Six months later they give three

reasons for their desires: the want of accommodation for their cattle, the fruitfulness and commodiousness of Connecticut, and what was much more to the purpose, the bent of their spirits to remove thither. The theocratic notions of the Boston divines did not harmonize with the more democratic ones of Hooker. It was time for the hive to swarm. The account of the removal of the Cambridge church to Hartford, given by Dr. Trumbull in his history of Connecticut, and much expanded in almost every history of Hartford and its ancient families, is thus given in the concise and graphic original. "About the beginning of June Mr. Hooker, Mr. Stone, and about a hundred men, women, and children, took their departure from Cambridge, and travelled more than a hundred miles, through a hideous and trackless wilderness, to Hartford. They had no guide but their compass; made their way over mountains, through swamps, thickets, and rivers, which were not passable but with great difficulty. They had no cover but the heavens, nor any lodgings but those which simple nature afforded them. They drove with them a hundred and sixty head of cattle, and by the way, subsisted on the milk of their cows. Mrs. Hooker was bourne through the wilderness upon a litter. The people generally carried their packs, arms, and some utensils. They were nearly a fortnight on their journey." The next year saw the extermination of the Pequots, the only people from whom the settlers had any fear of molestation. Here then in this quiet valley, looking out on the broad waters of the Connecticut on the east, on the Talcott Mountain range on the west, and within easy reach of their friendly neighbors of Windsor and Wethersfield on the north and south, here surely was an ideal resting place for weary mortals. Nevertheless, after a residence of less than three years, the settlers "moved the Court for some enlargement of accommodation," and desired that a committee "view those parts by Vnexus Sepus which may be suitable for their pur-



poses." How much the fertile meadows of Farmington and how much internal dissensions had to do with the swarming of this particular hive is uncertain. The situation which led to open rupture after the death of Hooker is not difficult to understand. The Hartford church had a triple leadership. The pastor, Thomas Hooker; the teacher, Samuel Stone; and the ruling elder, William Goodwin, were all strong men, and the duties of their respective offices, gathered from scanty scripture texts, were none too well defined. The teacher was "to attend upon points of knowledge and doctrine, though not without application," the pastor to attend upon "points of practice, though not without doctrine." The ruling elder was the man of affairs, the moderator in meetings, the watcher over the private conduct of church members, and the visitor of the sick. Whatever may have been the immediate cause, a number of Hartford families began the settlement of Farmington in 1640, and for more than thirty years there was no considerable departure of its people to other settlements. We know little of the life of the village during this period. All town votes before 1672 were recorded in "ye ould book" which, when the dry details of land grants had been copied out, was allowed to drop in pieces, and with it perished almost the only record of the habits and customs of the olden time. The church record, begun by John Steele in 1652, and indebted to Rev. Samuel Hooker for most of its value, contains a tedious account of the church dissensions from 1668 to 1675, which ushered in the removal of some of the best citizens to Waterbury. The two parties most active in the quarrel were James Bird and Simon Wrothum. On the 15th of June, 1673, "the church at Farmington assembled at Deacon Hart's to attend the admission of James Bird. . . . About eight brethren voted for his admission, three against it. . . . Whereupon the Pastor told the said James, that the Church did expect of those that joined, and consequently of him,

that he should promise to submit to the government of Christ in his house, walk with his brethren ; and fear, and keep all the commandments of God, as far as Christ should enable. To which the said James returned, . . . as the Lord liveth, I will not close with you thus ; and so departed the house." One of the two offenders was denied membership and the other was dismissed. The latter applied to the General Assembly of the Colony to cite the church before it to show the reason why they cast him out of the church. The Assembly saw no cause to give the church or council any trouble to appear before them, but advised said Wrothum to a serious consideration of his former ways. Time fails us to consider all the petty annoyances which made a separation desirable. There were no fertile fields in the west that caused this swarming of the hive. Dr. Bronson in his history of Waterbury says of the settlers, "They were tough men, and had come into a tough country ; a country which, for easy tillage, was in striking contrast with the plains of Farmington." The most recent historian of Waterbury says, "Why were these men not content? The question of land surely could not have been a serious one ; nor were its divisions so arbitrary as to account for the spirit of unrest that prevailed in Farmington, as elsewhere. Men were not equal. The government of towns was in the hands of a few men. Few were the changes in the more honorary offices, and heavy was the repression felt by the individual consequent upon the letter of the law, whose weight weighed him down more heavily than he could bear. Hence the efforts of the individual to seek out some tract of land, even if distant from the settlement, where he could, at least to his little herd of cattle, speak his mind, without suffering the consequences." To this indictment of our ancestors, it may be said that no lists of town officers before 1680 exist, and if a majority of the voters chose to give office to well tried men rather than as spoils of party activity to a succession of new men, who

shall oppugn their wisdom? The trouble was largely a church quarrel in which the participants were not the men to seek out some lonely spot in which to rehearse their woes to their flocks and herds, but at all times and in all places spoke their minds with great freedom and plainness of utterance, as was the custom of their day.

In October 9th, 1673, twenty-six of the most substantial citizens of Farmington presented a petition to the General Court sitting at Hartford for the establishment of a plantation at Mattacock, now Waterbury. The very kindly response of the Farmington church to the petition is as follows: "The Church having considered the desires of their brethren William, Thomas, John, and Benjamin Judd,—as also John Standley Jun. touching their removal from us to Mattatuck, agreed as followeth:—

"1. In general. That considering the divers difficulty and inconveniences which attend the place toward which they are looking, and how hazardable it may be, (for aught that appeareth,) that the house and ordinances of Christ may not, (for a large time at least,) be settled among them, the Church doth advise the brethren, to be wary of engaging far, until some comfortable hopes appear of being better suited for the inward man, in the great things forementioned.

"2. Particularly. To our brother William Judd,—that it having pleased God to deal so bountifully with him, that not many of the brethren with us have so large accommodations as himself, yet see not his call to remove on the account of straightness for outward subsistence,—and therefore counsel him,—if it may be with satisfaction to his spirit,—to continue his abode with us,—hoping God will bless him in so doing.

"3. To the rest. Though we know not how much they will be bettered as to land, all things considered, by their removal,—especially John and Benjamin Judd,—and therefore cannot much encourage,—yet if the bent of their spirits be strong for going, and the advice aforegiven, touching

the worship of God, be taken,—we shall not trouble,—but say,—the will of the Lord be done.”

The next swarm which left the hive chose for its home a spot in what was known as the Great Swamp. If you will take a car at the Berlin Junction railroad station on the Middletown branch, after going about a mile eastward, you will see at your left across a quarter of a mile of level ground, the white stones of the old Christian Lane Cemetery on ground slightly raised above the dead level of what was once the Great Swamp. Near by was the Seymour Fort fenced in with palisadoes and containing a well and cabins for nightly shelter from the Indians, and near by stood the first meeting house of Kensington Parish. What prompted the settlement of this lonely swamp cannot well be explained, but as early as January 18th, 1669-70, before the Eighty-Four Proprietors came into existence as such, the town granted to sixty-one men 1082 acres of land “in the Great Swamp lying on the branches of Mattebesit River through the condescendency of particular persons in the town to part with something of that which is their right, to persons of lesser estate on these conditions, viz., that this tract of land given to sundry persons shall perpetually and forever hereafter belong to and be a part of Farmington never to be a distinct people from the aforesaid town without their liberty and consent.” In December 22, 1681, the town again voted “that the upland adjacent to the Great Swamp shall be laid out so as they may best accommodate for inhabitants and the committee that laid out the swamp are chosen to do that work.” In December 27, 1686, the order was repeated and a committee of six named for its execution. Again on the 28th of September, 1705, the town votes “that so many of their inhabitants that do or shall personally inhabit at the place called the Great Swamp and upland belonging thereto and in the division of land on the east side of the Blue Mountains and in the lots called Bachelders lots and so much of the division of land against

Wethersfield as shall extend northward from the Great Swamp until it shal include the lot that was William Judd's and no more, so many of them, as see fit (none to be compelled), that they become a ministerial society, when they do gain a capable minister among them." The next month the proposed colonists prefer their petition to the General Assembly stating that "our unanimous desire is that the Worshipful Capt. Thomas Hart will prefer this our humble petition." Captain Thomas Hart was a representative from Farmington to the General Assembly and was the speaker of the house. It was around the worshipful captain as a center that the storm raged which attended the second division of the settlers and turned a peaceful community into an angry hive. The quarrel began about the choice of a successor to the lamented Rev. Samuel Hooker. An oldtime New England community without a minister was like a hive of bees without a queen. In 1701 the annual town meeting for the choice of officers was abruptly broken up, and it required an Act of the General Assembly the next year to set the machinery of government again in motion. The petty lawsuits arising were appealed to the higher courts, and the long and tedious details, looking trivial to all but the inflamed minds of the contestants, are spread over many pages of the records. All this verbosity is occasionally relieved by the vigorous language of the worshipful captain as when, "upon a Sabbath Day after the exercise, the church being stayed and a Fast propounded, Capt. Thomas Hart replied and said," quoting the words of the prophets of old, "When ye fasted and mourned . . . did ye at all fast unto me, even me? Behold ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness," etc. The day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer was not voted. After a trial of ten candidates whose names are duly recorded, and no doubt of many others, the General Assembly of the colony appointed "the reverend ministers of the towns of Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield to procure a minis-

ter for Farmington, who are hereby ordered to receive him and pay him as formerly until this Court do order otherwise or themselves agree." October, 1705, saw the grant of a distinct society called the Great Swamp Society, and the month following saw the departure of a committee of the town and church to Nantasket to negotiate with the divine chosen for them by the reverend ministers. They had selected a man from another state with sufficient power of will to hold his own until the storm subsided. The hive had swarmed and peace reigned.

Let us not judge our ancestors too severely for this one unfortunate episode. Deny the present residents of this happy valley all means of communication with the outer world, railroads, telegraphs, postoffices, newspapers, and even the slow stage coach; limit their thoughts and interest to the petty actions of neighbors close around them, and how much would they excel their forefathers? It is not so much human nature that changes as its surroundings.

The subsequent history of the Great Swamp or Kensington parish can best be found in the Ecclesiastical History of New Britain by Deacon Alfred Andrews. With a few words from a historical discourse by the late Rev. E. B. Hillard concerning the Great Swamp meeting-house and its surroundings, we will leave this part of our subject. He says, "I visited a short time since that sacred spot. I stood beside the ancient graves. I looked around upon the scenes on which the silent sleepers in them used to look. I turned my eyes, as the sun was setting, to the summit of the western mountain, whither, at sunset, their eyes had so often turned when home and friends lay beyond, and all was forest-wild between. In sight and near at hand was the swell on which stood the old meeting-house, in which they first covenanted to walk with Christ and with each other. . . . The snow lay on the ground, as a century and a half before it had lain there on the December day when they first, collecting from their

scattered homes, had gathered at the meeting-house to see him whom they had chosen to be their shepherd in the wilderness, set apart to his sacred work, and to covenant with him to be his people. . . . The spot where they sleep seems fit for their long rest. It is retired and lonely, as is now the history of their lives. The age in which they lived has passed away. The present is new and strange. It is meet that in their final rest they should be withdrawn from it. . . . And so it is. They sleep in peace. . . . the scene of their early homes is still almost as quiet as when no sounds were heard there save those of the Indian's footfall or the forest cry. There let us leave them to their sleep, beneath the trees, beside the river,

‘ Each in his narrow cell forever laid.’ ”

The next considerable exodus from the old center was southward. The first settler is supposed to have been one Samuel Woodruff, who made the place his summer residence for purposes of hunting and fishing, preferring the freedom of the forest to the restraints of the farm. Here his sixth child, David, was born in 1696, and was, by tradition, the first white child born in Southington. Monuments to the memory of Samuel and Rebecca, his wife, stand on Burying-Ground Hill. Other families came in slowly. By the year 1722 the number had so increased that the Proprietors of Common Lands ordered Panthorn surveyed and divided for individual holding. No reasonable explanation of the name has ever been given. Dr. Trumbull is quoted as saying that the word is not Indian. “As poor as Panthorn” was long a common phrase. In December, 1721, the First Ecclesiastical Society, “in consideration of the farmers southward of the town their hiring of Mr. Buck to preach among them this winter season, do agree and manifest the same by vote to abate the said farmers one-third part of each of their proportions toward the payment of Mr. Whitman's rate,” the four winter months constituting one-third of

the year. Winter privileges did not long satisfy. In 1724 the General Assembly gave the inhabitants of Panther a distinct existence as the Third or South Society of Farmington.

The next settlement within the original territorial limits of the town which attained a separate ecclesiastical organization was that of Bristol. In 1663 this town "granted to John Wadsworth, Richard Bronson, Thomas Barnes, and Moses Ventrus forty acres of meadow land lying at the place we commonly call Poland." Somehow, in February, 1650, the Rev. Roger Newton, two years before the beginning of his pastorate here, was the owner of "one parcel called Bohemia, through which a river doth run, containing by estimation fifty acres." Bohemia and Poland were included in the six divisions of land laid out in 1721 by the Proprietors of Common Lands west of the reserved lands. The inhabitants of five of these divisions, in 1742, represented to the General Assembly that they "are so remote from any meeting-house in any ministerial society in said town as renders it exceeding difficult for us to attend the public worship of God in any place where it is set up, and especially in the winter season." Winter privileges, so called, were granted them, and in 1744 they were constituted the New Cambridge Society.

In the year 1743, while these changes were taking place, the inhabitants of the West Society of Hartford living within the limits of the town of Farmington petition the General Assembly to be relieved from paying "ministerial and meeting-house charges" to Farmington, their location being such "as renders it very difficult to have any communication at all with Farmington so as to partake of any of the society privileges or be the better for them." The granting of this petition seems to have relieved all friction until the building of our new meeting-house in 1771, when certain farmers owning land in both towns petitioned the General Assem-



bly to be relieved from paying society taxes here. "Said First Society in Farmington," they say, "is very extensive as to its limits, their inhabitants wealthy, opulent, and numerous . . . are engaged in building a very superb and costly meeting-house." Petition granted.

The next separation was by the farmers on the north living in what was long known as Nod, afterward Northington and finally Avon. Nod extended north to Simsbury, the southern boundary of which was laid out through the mouth of Nod Brook. It was to Nod that John Hart had fortunately absented himself when all the other members of his father's house were burned on the night of December 15th, 1666. It had been known for a long time as Hart's Nod. Why Nod does not appear. Its pious owners could hardly have named it from the land of Nod on the east side of Eden into which Cain went from the presence of the Lord. In 1726 the inhabitants of the extreme north part of Nod and those of the south part of Simsbury petitioned the General Assembly to unite them into a new society, but the vote failed in the Upper House. Winter privileges were, however, granted them in 1746, that is, they "shall have liberty to hire some suitable orthodox person to preach the gospel among them during the months of December, January, February, and March annually." In 1750 the Nod people on both sides of the river were constituted "a distinct ecclesiastical society and parish by the name of Northington Parish." In 1754 they built on the east side of the river on high ground a meeting-house, which however was burned in 1817, leaving, as in the case of the Great Swamp parish, only a graveyard in a lonely spot to mark its site. In each cemetery lie the remains of the first pastors of each, of Burnham in the one and of Booge in the other. As we near the last considerable removal from the old village, it must have occurred to you that whatever may have been true of the state and the town, the ecclesiastical society certainly preceded the town except

in the few cases where they had a common origin. The minister was the most important personage in the land.

It was a quarter of a century before any further separation of the inhabitants took place. The five tiers of lots to the north of New Cambridge, known as the West Woods, were gradually settled by families from the adjoining towns, and in 1774 they were constituted a society by the name of West Britain, which in 1806 became the town of Burlington. The last families to leave the old center and form new societies were those of Plainville and Unionville, the former in 1840 and the latter in 1841. During the palmy days of the old canal the worshipers of both localities came to church at the old center by boat in the summer season. A rare Sunday picnic.

Divisions into new societies do not account for all the removals from the hive. At the close of the Revolutionary War, when Indian atrocities largely ceased, and the vast unknown regions of the west were open to settlers, they did not need a Sewall to tell them

"No pent-up Utica contracts your powers,  
But the whole boundless continent is yours."

Esquire Mix, than whom there could have been no better authority, in preparing material for Gov. Treadwell's History of Farmington, says: "There have emigrated from this town into other states between August 1783 and March 1802 inclusive, 147 families, which, allowing five to a family, will make the whole number 735, besides a number of unmarried persons of both sexes not belonging to those families, which I believe may be fairly estimated at 40 more. This will make the total number 775. They are principally gone into the states of New York and Vermont, though some few to different parts of the North West territory." This was written about the year 1800 when the town included Avon and Plainville. The manner of their going is set forth by Washington Irving in his Sketch Book, "with a whole family of

children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household trumpery, with pots and kettles dangling beneath, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee, or the Lord knows where." We have time this evening to give the names of only a few of the best known of the leaders of the great exodus. One of the first companies followed the west bank of the Connecticut River as the easiest route. They sent in advance three pioneers in a boat to spy out the land, Capt. Steel Smith, Joab Hoisington, and Benjamin Bishop. Landing in a meadow just north of the present village of Windsor, Vermont, they cut down a tree and claimed the place by possession. They were soon followed by Gen. Zebina Smith, Major Elisha Hawley, Capt. Israel Curtis, Deacon Hezekiah Thomson, Asahel Hoisington, and Elihu Newell, and later on by the Rev. John Richards. They did not carry their titles into the wilderness but acquired them there. Here in Windsor the most recent of their number printed bibles and a newspaper, and here they developed sterner puritanic notions than they had learned in their childhood's home. A Farmington boy in their printing office writes to his parents: "A dancing-school has been commenced here this winter, and it was understood that none were to have employment in our office who attended it." Three girls having transgressed, "In the morning I had to perform the unpleasant duty of dismissing them. Two of them had worked in the office for nearly two years, had been very faithful, and were good compositors." A little to the west of Windsor Ira Langdon and Aaron North settled, farther west, in Ludlow, Deacon Lee, and a little to the north, in Dummerston, Samuel Orvis. A large number journeyed northward on the west side of the Green Mountain range. Benjamin Lewis, John Ford, and Ambrose Collins stopped short in West Stockbridge. Col. Orsamus C. Merrill, successively printer, lawyer, and member of Congress, went on to Bennington, Vermont, Oliver Woodruff and Thomas Porter to Tinmouth. In Castleton, a

few miles to the north, Nathaniel Hart taught a grammar school, Selah Gridley practiced medicine and wrote poetry, Chauncey Langdon became a judge of probate, and Ebenezer Langdon owned a grist-mill. Cyrus Porter went to Middlebury, where William G. Hooker was a physician before he removed to New Haven, Conn. In Poultney lived and died Col. James Hooker. In Burlington, on Lake Champlain, resided George Wadsworth and Farmington's ancient tanner and shoemaker, Gabriel Curtis. In Montpelier, the state capital, lived Timothy Merrill, lawyer, and Col. James H. Langdon, a wealthy merchant, who was previously one of the Farmington colony at Windsor. To the west of Castleton along the New York state line, partly in one state and partly in the other, are to this day numerous descendants of Farmington Hookers, the names and virtues of whose ancestors are recorded in all the cemeteries around. Over the line into the state of New York the Farmington settlers journeyed. Rev. Asahel Norton became pastor of the first church in Clinton, and Seth Norton Professor of Languages in Hamilton College in the same place, which, while still an academy, had been in charge of Rev. Robert Porter, another native of Farmington, and all three graduates of Yale. Here also resided Martin Porter, and near by in Litchfield, New York, Joseph Hooker. The original members of the First Presbyterian Church of Sherman were mostly from the church in Farmington—George, Dennis, and Ava Hart, Elisha Woodruff, William Williams, Charles Hawley, Robert Woodruff, Hiram Gleason, together with the wives of most of them. Amzi Porter went to Smithfield, Jesse Cowles to Augusta, and Alpheus Hawley to Jamestown. To the Genesee country went Dr. Timothy Hosmer and Major Isaiah Thompson—the former successively the village doctor of Farmington, surgeon of the Sixth Connecticut Regiment in the Revolutionary War, and the first judge of Ontario County. An account of others who

were scattered all over the state would detain us too long. New York soon ceased to be the "Far West," and New Connecticut became the land of promise. New Connecticut you will hardly find in a modern atlas. In the year 1662 Charles II gave to the Governor and Company of Connecticut the territory of the present state and a strip of land of the same width extending westward across the continent to the South Sea, now the Pacific Ocean. In 1681, without troubling himself much about the geography of this western wilderness, and claiming the royal right to recall any gift and bestow it on some new favorite, he gave to Sir William Penn the land now known as the state of Pennsylvania. The north half of that state was included in both charters. Later on Connecticut men settled the Wyoming Valley, situated on the Susquehanna River in this common ground. Here they suffered all the horrors of Indian warfare in the successive Pennamite wars, and in the final massacre known the world over to all readers of Campbell's "Gertrude of Wyoming." Of the Farmington men engaged in the strife Major William Judd was four times chosen justice of the peace for the county of Westmoreland and was among those who in 1780 were voted compensation for losses sustained. Mervin Clark of our East Farms district lost a valuable farm and house, and barely escaped with the clothes on his back. Joseph Gaylord, a resident of Bristol and afterward of Farmington, removed from the latter place to Wyoming in the spring of 1769, whence he was driven out by the Pennamites in the following November. From Farmington he returned to Wyoming in 1772, and was in the Gaylord blockhouse in the Plymouth settlement during the massacre of July 3, 1778. There were other settlers with names identical with those of Farmington men of the time, but whether they were the same has not been clearly proved.

In 1786 Connecticut ceded to the United States the western part of the land claimed under the charter of 1662,

reserving, as the basis of her school fund, what now constitutes the ten northeastern counties of Ohio, and also reserving, for the benefit of the Connecticut towns burned by the British, the so-called "Fire Lands," now the counties of Erie and Huron lying next west. The whole reserved land was described as the "land lying east of a line 120 miles west of and parallel with the western boundary line of the state of Pennsylvania." The land was sold by a committee of one from each of the eight counties of Connecticut, John Treadwell of this town, afterwards Governor Treadwell, being first on the list. Thirty-six men who afterwards organized the Connecticut Land Company, purchased the three millions of acres for \$1,200,000. The share of Major William Judd of this town was \$16,256, and that of Gen. Solomon Cowles was \$10,000. To this land of promise came Farmington pioneers—Samuel Tillotson, Rollin Dutton, Lewis B. Bradley, Gad Hart, Daniel Woodruff, Rev. Ephraim Treadwell Woodruff, first pastor of the church in Wayne, and I know not how many more. Still further west in Kaskaskia, Judge Alfred Cowles, brother of the late venerable Egbert Cowles, settled in 1823 as a lawyer, his first stopping-place in his western journeyings. He was active in the anti-slavery fight at Alton, and later on practiced law in Chicago and San Francisco, and at length celebrated his one hundredth birthday at San Diego, July 7, 1887.

There were others who left the old home besides those who traveled with their families in the big ox-wagons. Young men tired of the monotony and restraints of this happy valley, and, hoping to better their fortunes, began to travel over the South and West. Their letters home show how the unusual manners and morals of the new world appeared to them, and how soon their own opinions of many things were changed. From a great variety of letters we have time to make a few selections in illustration from those of one young man only. In October,

1816, he left a commercial house in New York and a salary of \$350 to travel in its interest. After a voyage of seven days in a terrible gale, he arrived at Norfolk, Virginia, from which place he writes: "I was invited to dine and take tea with a gentleman to whom I had letters of introduction. I did myself the honor to attend, and was treated with the greatest hospitality. His wife was a lady of about thirty years of age, and highly accomplished, played charmingly on the forte piano and harp, and, in fact, was about as elegant a woman as I ever saw. They live in great style, and have about 15 or 20 negroes in the house. They have a fine plantation up in the country, where they live in the summer. They were quite inquisitive respecting the customs and habits of the northern people, and were much surprised at my relation respecting them. The people have very little regard for the Sabbath, Bible, or religion." He writes from Petersburg, November 17th, on his way to Richmond: "I have been now two weeks in Virginia, and have seen a considerable part of the country, but do not like it much. The general state of society here is wretched, and as respects morality, it is known in this state only by name. This day being Sunday, there is a large party engaged before the house where I am now writing in playing ball, fighting, halloing, swearing, and making every other kind of noise that their ingenuity and the whisky they have drunk prompts them to." Five weeks afterward he writes from the same place: "I have spent my time very agreeably, and am more pleased with the place and inhabitants." January 25th sees him still in Petersburg, about starting for Kaskaskia, Illinois Territory, having just returned from a six days visit to Norfolk, where he had a good time as before. "I was six days in Norfolk, and was treated with great hospitality by my acquaintances there, and attended two splendid parties. At one of them tea was brought in about dark, and was carried round in the same manner as you do in Connecticut. After tea the

ladies and gentlemen played whist till about 9 o'clock, when a fiddler was called and cotillions and country dances were performed till 1 or 2 o'clock, when the party adjourned. There were about twenty ladies present. During the evening we were regaled with the best of wine, cherry rum, apples, filberts, raisins, peaches in brandy, almonds, and every kind of foreign fruit that I think of. At about 11 we sat down to an excellent cold collation. Some of the ladies were very communicative and polite, and not so reserved as the northern girls. They converse very handsomely, and have, in general, received a very good education." His description of Williamsburgh, through which he passed, would answer as well for the present day. "It has formerly been quite a handsome town, but is now falling into decay in consequence of the seat of government having been removed to Richmond. The ancient college of William and Mary is in this place, where many of our first men have been educated. . . . In the yard of the college is a handsome marble statue erected in honor of Lord Bottetourt, one of the former governors of Virginia." On the 12th of February he had arrived in Pittsburg, having stopped a day in Washington to call on Mr. Pitkin, the member of Congress from this state and town. At Pittsburg he found the Ohio river frozen over and had to wait until about the first of March. On the 9th of April he writes from Kaskaskia: "I arrived in this place about 8 or 10 days since, after a thirty days passage from Pittsburg. . . . I came down the Ohio in a keel boat and stopped at a number of very handsome towns as I passed down, as Marietta, Cincinnati, Louisville, etc. The prospect is beautiful as you descend the river. I also passed through Vevay, a small town in Indiana which is inhabited by Swiss, who pay great attention to the grape and manufacture a great deal of wine, some of which I tasted." Of the fertile prairie lands all around him he speaks in the manner of the spies on their return from the promised land. No wonder the



delvers among the stony hillsides of Connecticut made haste for this western paradise. Here he remained until about the first of October, preparing the goods he was to take down the river, and hunting all sorts of game, with which the woods abounded. With western manners and morals, as before with southern, he was fast becoming acquainted. "Dancing is very fashionable in this place, particularly with the French, who indulge themselves almost every night in this amusement. There are no Moral Societies to rail against the innocent amusements." To his sister he writes: "In your last you make some inquiries how I passed my time on Sunday. There is no established church in the place except the French, and we commonly feel no great disposition to attend that, nor has there been any preaching since I have been here, and it is very seldom that there is any. When the weather is fine Sundays we commonly ride out on hunting expeditions or fishing, or, in fact, anything to amuse ourselves and drive away time, or sometimes we are employed in taking care of peltries, selling merchandise, posting books, etc., etc. We are troubled with no grand juror's spies, tything-men, etc., every man following the dictates of his own conscience." November 3d sees him in Baton Rouge, on the way to New Orleans. "I shall proceed there tomorrow, and from there I shall go on to New York as soon as I can dispose of the property I have in charge. . . . If I am fortunate I shall be in New York about the 25th of December." Kaskaskia was a favorite gathering-place for Farmington youths. Here were coming and going at or about this time, Edward Cowles, Erastus Scott, Alfred Cowles, Thomas Mather, John W. Mix, William Gleason, and doubtless others. All the way from Connecticut to New Connecticut Farmington men could be found. A prominent townsman of many years ago who had peddled tinware through the South in the days when stories of wooden nutmegs were rife, asserted that he had made a journey without expense to the Western Reserve and

back, finding acquaintances at every stopping-place happy to barter hospitality for news from their old homes. Whatever we may think of such economy, we are reminded of the great numbers who had gone from the old village.

Besides the broad West there was another outlet for the superfluous energy of the village. Much Farmington capital and some men were engaged in seal voyages. Starting from New Haven, they proceeded to the Falkland Islands, thence to the island of South Georgia, thence around Cape Horn to the island of Juan Fernandez, supposed to have been the home of Robinson Crusoe, and thence to Massafuera. Here they were accustomed to leave a part of their crew to catch seals, returning for them in about two years and taking with them the seals captured on some previous voyage. They touched next at the Sandwich Islands on their way to Canton. Here they exchanged their sealskins for tea, silks, nankeens, and china ware, and then touching at Calcutta, made their way home around the Cape of Good Hope. The history of some of the voyages has been minutely told, but how much our townsmen had to do with any particular voyage is uncertain. The ledgers of Elijah Cowles & Co., sold for old paper, might have told, and the records of the New Haven custom house certainly would, but during the recent stir in the matter of French Spoliations they were shipped to Washington as evidence, and are inaccessible to the ordinary investigator. A few glimpses come to us from other sources. David Catlin, a young man about town and a favorite in Farmington society, writes from the island of South Georgia to his friend Horace Cowles, then a student in Yale College. He left New York May 28th, 1800, crossed the equator on the fourth of July, celebrated both the crossing and the day with the usual ceremonies, stopped at sundry ports duly recorded, arrived at the Bay of St. George September 5th, stayed two months while building a shallop of 28 tons, and arrived at the island of South

Georgia December 17th, where he found seventeen sail of American and English ships. We must omit his description of the island, which you can read of elsewhere, and also the poetry he wrote on the voyage for the entertainment of his scholastic friend. We have also the original agreement of a crew signed at Massafuera April 1, 1803, in which many details of the business are set forth, and in which the crew agrees to remain two years and catch seals. The profits were divided about January, 1807, by Esquire John Mix at his office here. The ships *Oncida* and *Huron* were the most frequently mentioned in Farmington correspondence. The former carried sixteen guns and the latter twenty, for use, if necessary, against the Spaniards in Patagonia. These voyages began about the year 1796, and ended with the commencement of Jefferson's embargo, in December, 1807.

Farmington letters of the last century have much to say of ships fitted out by the merchants of this village at Middletown, New London, and New Haven, and sometimes stopping on their way at all three places. I once bought at a book auction in Boston what purported to be an important work on Farmington. It cost me twenty-five cents, and turned out to be the "Ship Book for the Brigantine *Mary*, September 10. 1792.  $\frac{3}{8}$  belonging to Solomon Cowles Jr. & Co.,  $\frac{3}{8}$  belonging to John & C. Deming,  $\frac{1}{4}$  to Capt. Amon Langdon Master." It contains a minute account of the cargo, from numerous horses down to one quire of paper. An account of five other voyages follows, the value of the cargoes varying from £677 to £1734.

An account of one more exodus from the village must complete the story. When gold was found in California, Farmington, too, had her Forty-niners who went around the Horn, and in due time returned not much poorer than they went, but rich in a fund of stories which lasted the rest of their lives. But it is not of them I would speak. A Farmington man, born in the Eastern Farms and edu-

cated at the Farmington Academy and at Yale College, Dr. Joseph Washburn Clark, with a party of settlers journeyed across the plains to California in the spring of 1850. A relative writes: "He never traveled on Sunday; whatever danger of Indians there might be, the wagons belonging to his party always stopped on Sunday, letting the rest of the train push on in their eagerness to reach California; and it always came out that his teams, refreshed by a day's rest, overtook the train before the next Sabbath." A quarter of a century of labor and honor, with sufficient wealth, awaited him in California.

Such have been some of the principal removals from the old center of Farmington. The tide has at length begun to turn. New names are fast taking the place of the old. But twelve of the surnames of the old Eighty-four Proprietors remain with us, while almost every state in the Union has its Farmington. I trust there are still enough descendants of the men of old left to take some interest in this too long rehearsal of matters fast fading from the memory of our people.





*First read at a Society Meeting*

## APPENDIX.

### SOCIAL LIFE IN FARMINGTON EARLY IN THE CENTURY.

BY JULIUS GAY OF FARMINGTON.

[The following article was prepared at my special request by Mr. Julius Gay of Farmington, a gentleman of fine education and of great intelligence in all matters of local and state history. I am sure it will very much interest the readers of my book. It is of special pertinence to these reminiscences, as Farmington is my native place and it depicts the social life into which I was born and in which I was reared. I have appended a few short notes, generally enlarging a little from my personal recollection some of the points spoken of by Mr. Gay.

The Edward Hooker, from whose journal of that time Mr. Gay makes several extracts, was my father. He kept a minute daily journal from the time of his graduation at Yale College in 1805 to about 1825, covering the period of his residence in South Carolina, his two years' tutorship at Yale, his marriage and the birth of two of his children (the second being myself), and the time of his taking young men to prepare them for college. The journal is an almost inexhaustible mine of materials for the study of the people and habits of that time.

J. H.]

The present village of Farmington, the original center of the old town which once extended from Simsbury on the north to Cheshire on the south, and from the river towns of Hartford and Wethersfield westward beyond the Burlington mountain range, occupies about the same ground as the village of the Revolution. On the site of Unionville the tavern of Solomon Langdon stood almost alone on the forest trail which led to Litchfield and far-off Albany. Plainville, then known as the "Great Plain," had only a few scattered houses, while Avon, Bristol, Burlington, and Southington, though parts of the town when the revolution began, were separate communities, having meeting-houses and a social life of their own. The dwellers on the rich alluvial soil along the Farmington River were industrious and prosperous. The horrors of Indian warfare came all around them and left them unharmed. The only revolutionary armies which marched through their streets were the friendly troops of Rochambeau.

At the close of the war the one or two stores on the main street gave place to a dozen or more that supplied the wants of the numerous villages springing up to the westward. Their owners began to import their own goods from the West Indies and even from far-off China. From Middletown they shipped to the West Indies, in their own vessels, oxen, cows, beef, pork, flour, corn, and all manner of farm products, until the breaking out of the war between England and France in 1792 let loose the French privateers on their unprotected commerce and gave rise to the still unsettled "French Spoliation Claims." Later on from 1800 to 1806 much Farmington capital was invested in trade with China; in the ship *Sally*, Capt. Storer; the *Huron*, Capt. Moulthrop; the *Onida*, Capt. Brintnall, and other ships, usually with a Farmington supercargo. Along with the ships sailed young men of the village seeking more stirring adventures than the quiet streets of their native village afforded.\* Their letters home from Canton, the islands of the South Atlantic and South Pacific, then first explored by adventurous navigators, gave brilliant pictures of foreign travel when life was young and every scene a surprise. We have letters from the Falkland Islands off the east coast of Patagonia, from South Georgia some seven hundred miles eastward, and several from Massafnera just west of Juan Fernandes. At these places they captured large numbers of seals, making up cargoes of sealskins, on one voyage at least, 13,025, which were sold in Canton for ninety-five cents each, and the proceeds invested in silks, nankeens, tea, and china ware. Then, after circumnavigating the globe, the adventurers sailed back to New Haven, and the wealthy owners divided the spoils. So Farmington, for one generation, grew rich and took on luxurious habits. President Porter, in his discourse of 1872, says, "The old meeting-house began to rustle with silks and to be gay with rib-

\* Among these sailors was my uncle, James Hooker, an older brother of my father, of whom I give some account in a note at the foot of page 317. I remember well Captain Mix (a son of Squire Mix, a leading citizen of the town), who used to walk about the streets in his blue jacket, with the traditional gait of an old sailor. He was then but a middle-aged man, but was of intemperate habits, and as I understood lost for that reason his place as a ship master under the Cowles Brothers. I was a small boy when he died. Life on the sea seems at that time to have been a school of intemperance. It became the vice not merely of the fore-castle, but of the cabin. It made a great change in this respect when the daily allowance of grog to each sailor was wholly discontinued, as it was by 1830.



bons. The lawyers wore silk and velvet breeches, broadcloth took the place of homespun for coat and overcoat; and corduroy displaced leather for breeches and pantaloons. As the next century opened, pianos were heard in the best houses, thundering out the 'Battle of Prague' as a *tour de force*, and the gayest of gigs and the most ostentatious of phaetons rolled through the village. Houses were built with dancing halls for evening gayety, and the most liberal hospitality, recommended by the best of cookery, was dispensed at sumptuous dinners and suppers." At this rapid increase of wealth and luxury, Gov. Treadwell sounds a note of warning. "The young ladies," he says, "are changing their spinning-wheels for forte-pianos, and forming their manners at the dancing school rather than in the school of industry. Of course the people are laying aside their plain apparel manufactured in their houses, and clothing themselves with European and India fabrics. Labor is growing into disrepute, and the time when the independent farmer and reputable citizen could whistle at the tail of his plough with as much serenity as the cobbler over his last, is fast drawing to a close. The present time marks a revolution of taste and of manners of immense importance to society, but while others glory in this as a great advancement in refinement, we cannot help dropping a tear at the close of the golden age of our ancestors, while with a pensive pleasure we reflect on the past, and with suspense and apprehension anticipate the future." Good Deacon Samuel Richards also exclaims, "The halcyon days of New England are past. The body of the people are putting off rigidity in habits and morals."

One of the first results of increasing wealth was a desire for a better education for their children than the district school afforded. Already, in 1792, Miss Sally Pierce had established her famous school in Litchfield under the patronage of Chief Justice Tapping Reeve, Gov. Wolcott, Col. Tallmadge, and other distinguished men, probably the first female seminary in America. Here were sent the young ladies of this village until the Farmington Academy was established. E. D. Mansfield, LL.D.,\* once connected

\*Edward D. Mansfield, here mentioned, was born in New Haven in 1801, prepared for college with my father, graduated at Princeton College in 1822, studied law in Litchfield, settled in Cincinnati, where he was elected professor of constitutional law in Cincinnati College in 1836, soon after leaving that position for journalism, in which he continued the rest of his life. He died in 1880. He was the author of several books. His "Personal Memories" was published in 1879.

with the "Old Red College" of Mr. Edward Hooker of this village, gives us in his "Personal Memories" an outside view of the school as it appeared a few years later, on his first visit to Litchfield. "One of the first objects which struck my eyes was interesting and picturesque. This was a long procession of school girls coming down North street, walking under the lofty elms, and moving to the music of a flute and flageolet. The girls were gayly dressed and evidently enjoying their evening parade in this most balmy season of the year. It was the school of Miss Sally Pierce, one of the earliest and best of the pioneers in American female education. That scene has never faded from my memory. The beauty of nature, the loveliness of the season, the sudden appearance of this school of girls, all united to strike and charm the mind of a young man, who, however varied his experience, had never beheld a scene like that." He was about to enter the Litchfield Law School, a famous institution which gathered numerous brilliant young men, especially from the south. Their proximity might have been a disturbing element in the quiet of the young lady's school had Miss Pierce lacked the wisdom to manage discreetly what would have ruined a weaker administration. The young men were allowed to call on certain evenings, but woe to the man who transgressed ever so slightly the laws of strict decorum. To be denied admission to Miss Sally Pierce's parlor was the deepest disgrace which could befall a young man. A school girl writes home that a "Mr. L—— was very attentive to Miss N—— of Farmington, and gazed at her so much that it mortified Miss N——, and Miss Sally spoke to him, and he has not been in the house since March." It was only after much correspondence and penitence that Mr. L—— was reinstated. On leaving the school each girl was expected to bring home to her admiring parents some evidence of proficiency in her studies. Those who could, exhibited elaborate water color drawings which have ever since hung on the walls of Farmington parlors. Others less gifted were advised to paint their family coat of arms, and, if they had never heard of any, they soon learned how all this could be managed without any correspondence with the Herald's College. One Nathan Ruggles, who advertised in the Connecticut Courant, "at his Looking Glass and Picture Store, Main Street, opposite the State House, city of Hartford," had somehow come in possession of the huge folio volume of "Edmonson's Complete Body of Heraldry," and allowed anyone to select from

its vast assortment of heraldic monsters, "Gorgons and Hydras and Chimeras dire," such as suited his taste. His sole charge was the promise of being employed to frame the valuable work when done. I have seen several of these devices which were brought home from Litchfield, some done in water colors and some in embroidery, with combinations of color which would make a herald stare. They had, however, just as good right to them as ninety-nine out of a hundred of the families who flaunt coat armor and pictures of English castles, and all that in their published genealogies. Nathan Ruggles, who was in a measure responsible for all this spurious heraldry, came to an untimely end. We read in the *Connecticut Courant* that in a private display of fireworks at his house, the whole suddenly exploded and brought his heraldic career to an all too brilliant conclusion. Music was not a specialty of Miss Pierce, and so the Farmington young ladies were removed to the school of Mr. Woodbridge in Middletown, where a piano was procured for their use, and instruction was given them by a Mr. Birkenhead. One of them writes, "My Papa has just informed me that I might go to Middletown this summer to school with my cousin Fanny. I am so strongly attached to my native place that it is not without regret that I leave it; from the calm scenes of pleasure into a busy crowd of extravagant people. I have been warned of my danger. My Mamma is something unwilling I should go, for fear that the pleasures of the world and its fashionable enjoyments will gain an ascendancy over me and raise ambitious views and lead me into the circle of an unthinking crowd." Two years afterward she is sent to New York to continue her musical studies and writes, "Had a long passage here; no female kind on board with us, but plenty of male, . . . and above all was Mr. Wollstonecraft, brother to the famous Mary Godwin, author of the 'Rights of Women.' He was a very good looking man, conversed handsomely, and was, to appearance, of great information. He informed me that his sister died two years ago. . . . I have seen him once since we came here. He is an officer in the army stationed at New York." By Mary Godwin she refers to the mother of the future wife of the poet Shelley.

The first piano in town of which I find mention was bought by Gen. Solomon Cowles, probably in 1798 or 1799. In November 6, 1799, his niece writes, "Wednesday . . . Came to Uncle Solomon's to hear the music, piano and bass-viol and three voices.

. . . From there to Mr. Chauncey Deming's to see their new piano, which is a very good one. It has ten more keys than Fanny's." A piano was bought about this time by Zenas Cowles, and these three pianos were probably the only ones in town for several years.\* As for the style of music rehearsed on these instruments, we read: "Wednesday eve. Mr. Birkenhead had a benefit at Gridley's and his pupils played, all except Nabby Deming and myself. He wished me to play, but as I did not sing I thought it not best. Fanny played much the best, and sung extremely well, indeed. The tunes she played were 'The Shipwreck,' 'The Tear,' and 'The Bud of the Rose.' Dr. Todd, I. Norton, and Lareon were there with their instruments. After

\* When I was a small boy my father purchased a piano for my sister, three years older than myself. There were at that time but few pianos in the village, and they had not ceased to be curiosities, and to be regarded as extravagances. My father was very fond of music, and began at once to amuse himself with the piano, though he never became an expert player. I often heard him for an hour at the piano after we had all gone to bed, and he not infrequently spent an hour over it at midnight when he happened to have a wakeful night. My uncle James, whom I have spoken of on page 27 as his wayward brother, whose intemperate habits compelled my father to relinquish his settled plan of going into the practice of law in Columbia, So. Car., with his brother John (see page 237), and to settle in Farmington and take the family farm and the care of his father and mother, was then living with the old people at Farmington, and, upon the death of my grandfather, came into our family. My father was the youngest member of the family, and the only one (besides James) who was not settled in life. My uncle James, I remember well, in all my childhood. He lived to be 67. He had been a sailor under the Cowles Brothers, and had spent a few years on the sea. He there acquired the common habit of sailors of taking their daily grog, as well as a familiar use of their picturesque and often very emphatic language. He had been a bright boy, and through life was very fond of sitting all day in his room and reading. He had very positive views of social matters, and greatly disliked the introduction in our homespun village of pianos and extravagance. I have often seen him terribly irritated by my sister's inartistic practice upon it, and remember his once saying, as we stood in the yard, with the noise from it coming through the open window, "There goes again that d——d eternal jewsharp." His death was preceded by a long typhoid fever, during which my father watched over and nursed him night and day, feeling, I think, that he had been too impatient with him in his "often infirmity." When at last, at the end of several weeks, he died, my father at once went to bed in complete exhaustion, and died in four days. He was but 61, and ought to have lived twenty years longer. Thus was wasted the life of one of the brightest of the family, and more than wasted, since in going down it carried with it the life of my father, one of the best and most useful of men.—J. H.

the playing was finished the company danced two figures, and George [afterward Gen. George] danced a hornpipe. Came home at twelve o'clock."

And now with the young men, some in college and some in Canaan Academy, and the girls in Litchfield or Middletown, what sort of schools had they left behind them? As good as those of our neighbors, and as much better as the lifelong labors of Gov. Treadwell could make them. Two or three young misses, just beginning to write letters, thus inform their dignified cousin at Yale: "Mr. Lee," that is, Matthew Lee, the teacher, "says that the girls make more disturbance than all the rest of the school. I learn Geography but not Grammar, because Mr. Lee says he does not understand English Grammar." Eight months afterwards our collegian is informed—"We have got a good schoolmaster. His name is Gordon Johnson. You must be a good boy, and learn as fast as you can." A year later we learn that—"Mr. Nathan North keeps our school. He boards at our house. Mr. North has between thirty and forty scholars in his school." It was visited on the last day of the year by Gov. Treadwell, Major Hooker, Rev. Mr. Washburn, Deacon Bull, Col. Isaac Cowles, and Gen. Solomon Cowles. Imagine these ponderous dignitaries sitting around the blazing log fire on that winter's day. I will warrant there was no want of decorum in school that day, on the girls' side or anywhere else. What hard questions they put does not appear. Probably Messrs. Washburn, Treadwell, and Bull could hardly have failed to inquire, "What is the chief end of man?" One lively miss writes, "They praised us very much, and if I was sure you would not think I was proud, I would tell you that my writing was judged the best in school." Good penmanship was considered of the first importance, and was the one qualification most insisted on in the examination of teachers. Nathan North, sitting at his desk one winter's day after school was out, writes to a friend—"It is six o'clock, and I am at my schoolhouse writing in the dark. Oh wretched man that I am, because I can write no better."

But enough of schools. The intellectual life of the middle aged found exercise in the several debating and literary societies of the day, The Social Club, The Union Society, The Weekly Meeting, and I know not how many others. The latter comes into being January 15, 1772, with this ponderous preamble: "It has been justly observed in all ages that vice increases when

learning is on the decline, and, on the contrary, when useful learning flourishes, it in some measure excludes vice and immorality; and we, the subscribers, sensible of the prevalence of vice and the low state useful learning is in among us," etc., etc. We learn, however, that after a few weeks this meeting joined the Social Club, under different regulations. A series of fourteen essays written by Amos Wadsworth for these clubs, beginning with the year 1772, and as many more by his brother Fenn, have come down to us. The subjects, many of them, show the theological bias of the age. Some of them were—"Conscience, whether it be lawful to follow its dictates in all cases;" "Infant Baptism vindicated;" "Extorted Promises not binding;" "Beasts not rational;" "Enslaving Negroes vindicated;" "Origin of Civil Society;" "The Sabbath Evening must be kept holy;" "Theft ought not to be punishable with death;" "The duty of unregenerate men to pray;" "The Supreme Magistrate not to be resisted;" "The Powers of Congress." The club sometimes also dropped into poetry. They have left us a "Song to Sylvia," in six verses, with much about love and turtle dove, the nightingale and amorous tale, and other interesting matters. I speak of these clubs as being the progenitors of those of the next two generations with which our subject is more immediately concerned, in which other topics are discussed, and when thought begins to take a broader range. In 1813 we hear of the "Moral Society." Mr. Hooker records—"Thursday, Sept. 9. Evening. Attended the 'Moral Society,' when the conversation was chiefly on the means of resisting the vice of profane swearing." The next week the society conversed "on the use of ardent spirits at the meetings of people for business." At other meetings they discussed colonization for the negro, paper money, and other topics of a political nature, until the one member who looked upon slavery as a divine ordinance came to denounce the Moral Society and all effort to interfere with the morals of the community or the nation as odious, comparing them with the inquisition of Spain and the system of espionage in the time of Bonaparte. A more genial body of men was the "Conversation Club," which met weekly at the houses of the members and discussed a wide range of topics. The principal members were Doctors Todd and Thomson, Mr. Goodman, principal of the academy, Egbert Cowles, Alfred Cowles, George Robinson, Nataniel Olmsted, and sometimes other prominent men. Mr.

Hooker almost always attended, and wrote in his diary an abstract of the subjects considered, and the diverse opinions of each of the members. We have space for only the most meagre account of these most interesting discussions. They conversed on the penitentiary system; to what extent it is desirable that the benefits of education be diffused among the mass of people; on poor laws; on the expediency of further and greater encouragement being given to the manufacturing interests of the United States; on the distribution of the public school money of Connecticut; on the assessment of property, and on other questions mostly of public utility. There were also monthly meetings of the village library company, in which they discussed the merits of new books, and Mr. Hooker records the talk at length. The comparative value of the "Commentaries" of Clarke and Scott and Gov. Treadwell's criticism of "Johnson's Lives of the Poets," especially interested them. The ladies, too, had a society known as the Female Society, for aiding in the education of pious youth for the ministry. By far the most interesting conversations recorded by Mr. Hooker are those which he himself held with the good people of the village in his daily walks among them, and which he recorded at length when he returned at night, revealing what Farmington society most cared for, and giving some insight into its culture and intellectual breadth. We can give but glimpses of it. He says—"In the afternoon moralized with Mr. Chauncey Deming at his store about an hour . . . . He entertained me with some description of the manners that prevailed thirty or forty years ago. He says that more expense is bestowed on the bringing up of one youth than was formerly bestowed on twenty. Young fellows would often, perhaps generally, go to meeting without stockings and shoes in the summer till they were fourteen or fifteen years old. Not more than twenty-eight years ago the girls would attend balls with checkered aprons on, and he has many a time gone to a ball with Dema (his wife) attired in that way." Again—"Made a call of an hour or two at Chauncey Deming's. Conversed on his favorite theme, the selfishness of the human character." With Gov. Treadwell he converses on the common origin of mankind, on foreign missions, on Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," and on the sudden growth of Farmington opulence; and with Capt. Seymour on the most profitable mode of reading. With President Dwight he "walked very leisurely, and conversed on various topics, but

mostly on matrimony," he being particularly interested in that subject at that time. One afternoon he calls at Mr. Pitkin's, who was busy with some law business, "so Mrs. Pitkin said she must be unceremonious enough to ask me into the room where were her friends, Mrs. L. and Mrs. M., seated by a good fire and very social. The conversation turned on the reasoning power of brutes, catching rats, suicide, and various other things." Riding home from Hartford with Mrs. Pitkin, they discourse on the utility of newspapers, on the belittling nature of the ordinary strifes among men for village distinction, on the character of some public men, especially of John Randolph, and on the Quakers of Philadelphia, among whom Mrs. Pitkin had visited. Soon after Dr. Porter's settlement here, after noting all his wanderings for the day, he says, "Walked to the Rev. Mr. Porter's and spent the evening. There was quite a large assemblage, more than a dozen in number. Mrs. Washburn and her sister, Misses Charity Cowles, C. Mix, C. Deming, Mary Ann Cowles, Mary Treadwell, Maria Washburn, and Messrs. Porter, G. Norton, Camp, T. Cowles, W. L. Cowles, T. Root, and Egbert Cowles. The evening was spent in mixed conversation and singing, and the company was treated with cider and walnuts. The subjects of conversation were the Rev. Mr. Huntington's dismission, the character of the Philadelphia clergy and those of New York, the state of piety in the cities of New York and Charleston, the Southern Baptists, and numerous other topics suited to the time and place." Of all the conversations which he so laboriously reported, none can begin to compare for clearness of thought, breadth of range, liberality of sentiment, and nobility of heart and mind, with those of Dr. Eli Todd. He says—"Dr. Todd is hardly willing to rank the pleasures of music with those of sense, for he thinks them intimately connected with the best affections of the heart. At least he believes this pleasure never exists in a high degree except when so connected. When in Trinidad he daily saw a tiger of prodigious fierceness confined in a cage, so rapacious that if a piece of meat were put to him he would instantly tear it into shreds. He played airs on a flute by the cage day after day, and the beast every day seemed less wild, till in a short time he would purr like a cat and roll and rub and be apparently the subject of inexpressible delight." An experience which may have profited the doctor in his new and kindly methods of treating the insane in after life. Again he discourses on "the



state of society in Farmington, the causes and consequences of the particular form which its character takes, and on earthquakes and meteors." On another occasion he talks on the "subject of expensive rural embellishments in reference to Daniel Wadsworth's country seat, and discussed whether it be justifiable to expend one's superfluous wealth in such a way, or in the expensive gratification of a taste for the fine arts. He argued for the affirmative, and insisted that the rich have a right to gratifications as well as the poor." Again he conversed "on those peculiarities of character which mark a simple state of society, holding that a high cultivation of the intellect, if not a part of virtue, is necessary to give to virtue its highest degree of beauty and loveliness, and on whether a state of society devoted to the rural interest or to commerce is to be preferred." Again he discourses "on the kind and degree of evidence by which the Christian revelation is supported," and "on the effects of ardent spirits, and on the threatening danger to the country from the prevalent use of them."

The dangers of intemperance to the State were only just beginning to force themselves on the attention of thinking men. Deacon Bull, writing an account of the town to be used by Gov. Treadwell in his "Statistical History of Farmington," under the head of vices does not once allude to intemperance. He says: "The number and kind of vices in the town are too many for the compass of my ability to find out or enumerate; however, there is nothing in this respect distinguishable from other towns of the same age, numbers, and experience. In particular, card-playing and profane swearing are the most prominent vices of the town. The inhabitants, in general, are industrious, sober, and peaceable."

While the men amused themselves with their clubs, moral or conversational, the ladies read at home whatever books came in their way. He who will, may examine the records of the village library and find charged to them the works of Jonathan Edwards and other books which are not often called for in the library of to-day, and whose titles are as unfamiliar to us as most of those we read will be to our children. One devourer of books writes in her diary: "Yesterday, which was Monday, I went to Hartford in the stage with Miss Sally Pierce. . . . Bought a couple of books,— 'Wilberforce's View,' 6/, and 'Memoirs of Miss Susanna Anthony,' 3/6; the former, Miss Pierce advised me to purchase." We hear no more of Mr. Wilberforce and his "View," but, on leaving the school in Middletown, Mr. Woodbridge presented her with

"Reflections on Death." Two Sundays afterwards she writes: "Attended meeting all day; read in 'Reflections on Death'; found it very interesting as well as instructive." Here is her experience with a famous novel she got from the library: "Thursday evening. Read in 'Sir Charles Grandison,' a novel I don't intend to read any more." But she did. Two weeks afterward she wrote: "Saturday. At home. Evening, read in 'Grandison.' Sunday. Stayed at home; read in 'Grandison'; had a very bad pain in my head. Monday. As usual. Evening. Read in 'Grandison.'" Two weeks later: "Went to Mr. Bull's . . . to get the second volume of 'Grandison' which I have read almost through." The Saturday following she writes: "Have been so much reading 'Grandison' that other things have been neglected." This is the last we hear of Sir Charles. How any mortal could have waded through the one thousand nine hundred and thirty-three octavo pages of that famous book, even with skipping nine pages out of ten, is a mystery to all moderns. In the early days of the library, some one calling at Mr. Ezekiel Cowles's remarks: "Egbert is now reading the 'Lady of the Lake,' which seems to be a very fashionable book about here."

Schools and music, debating clubs, books, and serious conversation filled up but a small part of the leisure hours of society. Five o'clock teas and evening parties assembling by invitation were not in vogue. Families were larger than now, and the young people from one house had but to join their cousins across the street to make the liveliest gatherings. Others dropped in, and, somewhere every night, there were dancing and music and games and hearty enjoyment. One favorite meeting-place on a summer evening was the long flight of stone steps which led from the street up to the ever hospitable door of Squire Mix. Another favorite locality involving a somewhat longer walk which sometimes had its own attractions, was "The Maples." I think, but am not positive, that this must have been the familiar name of the residence of Gov. Treadwell, the little red house by the side of Poke Brook, near the great rock. Here are a few glimpses of these informal gatherings: "To Gen. Cowles's, where we found a lively little party engaged in a family dance, with a couple of negroes to play for them. Much affability and hilarity." Or, "All the ladies were at Mr. Norton's, and the gentlemen. We played 'Button.' I was mortified by a lad's handing me the button twice following." Again: "Thursday we went to Fanny's.

All the girls were there, and, among the rest, Miss N — H —. Tim and Tim were there (afterward Major Timothy Cowles and Major Timothy Root). They proposed trying fortunes. N — tried hers. (I'll tell you how we try them.) We take a glass and a ring and tie a string around the ring and hold it in the glass and let it strike the glass, and count A, B, C, etc. N's struck M — C —." Much previous knowledge seems to have entered into this as into most fortune-telling, for soon afterward it was announced from the pulpit that M — C — and N — H — intend marriage. Even the weekly prayer-meeting had its social side. Here female piety came to hear the teaching of the beloved Washburn, and here, too, came young men not always of devout reputation. Until near the close of the ministry of Dr. Porter it was the fashion to seat the men on the right side of the hall in evening meetings and the women on the left, in the vain attempt to defy the strongest of nature's laws. When Dr. Porter began his ministry here, a young lady writes: "Mr. Porter addressed the gentlemen and requested them to sit down and wait till the ladies were out of the hall. We arrived safely home without any escort, as the gentlemen, alas! could not overtake us. Mr. B — got to us just as we crossed the street, after a long running." In the winter evenings the young people amused themselves with sleighrides. Commonly they drove to Southington, stopping at all the inns on the way — at least the boys did — and returning had a supper at Cook's in White Oak, and so home. Occasionally they rode to Solomon Langdon's, stopping, of course, at Thomson's by the way. Those old houses, Langdon's and Cook's, somber enough in our day, have probably seen more of mirth and good cheer than any other two in town. Here are a few specimens of a girl's experiences: "February 23, 1798, . . . We went to Mr. Jonathan Thomson's; came back. Coming by the meeting-house, the bell rang [9 o'clock, of course]. Down to Mr. Dunham's we went; stayed there about an hour, then down to Mr. Job Lewis's, then to Mr. Selah Lewis's. All abed. Came back to Mr. Dunham's. We stayed there about an hour longer. Got home about 2 o'clock. Got to bed and asleep about 3." One more account must suffice. On the day after Thanksgiving in 1799 they planned a sleighride, but an inopportune rain carried off all the snow; this, however, made no difference; they went all the same. "Cleared off at noon; took the stage and went out to Langdon's to dine. On the back seat were four, S —, F —,

B——, and myself. Next N—— H——, and D——, and A—— M——, Next L——, and M——, N—— H——, G——, and M——. Dick Gleason, negro, drove four horses. T—— C, T—— R——, T——, and S—— on horseback. Had a very good dinner, fried towels, pies, chicken-pies, and cake. There was a live owl there, and after we got seated in the stage it was flung in, and then—what a screaming! Set out to come home and the boys got whipping and running horses. Very muddy. You may depend I was frightened. The girls' white cloaks were covered with mud, and Sukey told me this afternoon she had been washing hers and could not get it out. In the evening went to the ball. Had a very good one. Thirteen ladies and about as many gentlemen." Fifteen years later we have a picture of social life in Farmington by the same Mr. E. D. Mansfield, who gave us his impressions of the school of Miss Sally Pierce. He says: "In August, 1815, my father took me to Farmington, Conn., to prepare, under a private tutor, to enter college preparatory to the study of law. . . . As this was to me a new and striking life, I will give a little description of it, chiefly for the sake of the inside view I had of New England society. My tutor, Mr. Hooker, was a descendant of one of the old New England families, and had all the characteristics of the Puritans; was very religious and exact in all his duties. He lived on what had been a farm, but a portion of it had been embraced in the town. Having got forward in the world, he had built a new house. His old house was one of the oldest in the country, large, dark-red, with a long, sharp, projecting roof. This was the residence and schoolroom of the students, and we called it "Old Red." There were about fourteen of us, from nearly as many states. There we lodged and there we recited, while we took our meals at Mr. Hooker's. His son, John, afterward married Miss Isabella Beecher, now the noted Mrs. Isabella Hooker.\*

"Mr. Hooker was a deacon in the church—the church, I say, emphatically, for it was the only one in the village—a monument remaining to the old and unquestioned orthodoxy of New England. It stood on the little green, its high, sharp spire pointing to heaven. The pastor of that church was Mr. Porter, who preached there for nearly half a century [sixty years]. He was the father of the present Noah Porter, president of Yale College.

\* Mrs. Hooker's friends would hardly recognize her by this name, as she invariably writes her name Isabella Beecher Hooker.—J. H.

Mr. Hooker took a large pew for the students, and he told us to make notes of the sermon, upon which he questioned us. I was always thankful for this exercise, for I got into such a habit of analyzing discourses that, if the speaker had any coherence at all, I could always give the substance of the sermon or address. This is, to a newspaper man, a useful talent. I have tried to discover what was the religious effect of this continual hearing and analyzing sermons, but could not find any. Such exercises become a habit, and are purely intellectual. A striking figure is sometimes remembered, but any spiritual effect is wanting on young people who have not learned to think seriously. I remember one of Mr. Porter's illustrations of the idea of death, which I think he must have taken from Sir Walter Scott's 'Talisman.' At any rate Scott has beautifully described it in that work. It is that of Saladin, who, in the midst of the most splendid fête, surrounded by his chiefs, had the black banner unfolded, on which was inscribed, 'Saladin, remember thou must die!' Mr. Porter was more than half a century minister in that parish, and a most successful clergyman, honored in his life and in his death. Such was the ministration of the church to me, but I must say that in the service the chief objects of my devotion were the bright and handsome girls around. At that time, and to a great degree yet in a New England village, out of the great stream of the world, its young women were the largest part of the inhabitants, and by far the most interesting. The young men usually emigrated to the cities of the West, in the hopes of making fortunes. The old people were obliged to remain to take care of the homesteads, and the young women stayed also.

"No place illustrated this better than Farmington, where there were at least five young women to one young man. The advent of the students was, of course, an interesting event to them. And a young gentleman in his nineteenth year was not likely to escape wholly the bright shafts which, however modestly directed, he was sure to encounter. I soon became acquainted with these young ladies, and never passed a pleasanter time than when days of study were relieved by evenings in their society. My father went with me to Farmington and introduced me to the Hon. Timothy Pitkin. This gentleman was then a very distinguished man. He was one of the leading men of the old Federal party. He was sixteen years a representative from the State of Connecticut, and had written a very good book on the civil history and statistics of

this country. He was a plain man of the old school, living in an old-fashioned house near the church. In two or three weeks after I had been in 'Old Red,' Mr. Pitkin called upon me and said his daughters would be glad to see me on a certain evening. Of course I accepted; and on that evening, arrayed in my unrivaled blue coat, with brass buttons, cravated and pinked, according to the fashion, I presented myself at Mr. Pitkin's. It was well I had been accustomed to good society, for never was there a greater demand for moral courage. On entering the parlor I saw one young man leaning on the mantel-piece, and around the room (for I counted them) were eighteen young ladies! During the evening my comrade and self were reinforced by two or three students, but *five* made the whole number of young men who appeared during the evening. The gentleman who was in the room when I entered it was Mr. Thomas Perkins of Hartford, who afterward married Miss Mary Beecher, the daughter of Dr. Lyman Beecher. The town of Farmington furnished but one beau during the evening, and I found out afterward that there were but two or three in the place; I mean in that circle of society. This was perhaps an extreme example of what might have been found in all the villages of New England, where, in the same circle of society, there were at least three girls to one young man. You may be sure that when I looked upon that phalanx of eighteen young women, even the assurance of a West Point cadet gave way. But the perfect tact of the hostess saved me from trouble. This was Miss Ann Pitkin, now Mrs. Denio, her husband being Mr. Denio, late Chief-Justice of New York. Miss Pitkin evidently saw my embarrassment, which was the greater from my being near-sighted. She promptly came forward, offered me a chair, and, introducing me to the ladies, at once began an animated conversation. In half an hour I felt at home, and was ever grateful to Miss Pitkin.

"I will mention here, as one of the characteristics of New England manners, that Mr. and Mrs. Pitkin never once entered the room on this occasion, and the older people never appeared at any of the parties or sleighrides given by the young people, or at any gatherings not public. This was contrary to the custom of my father's house, where people of all ages attended the parties, and my mother was the most conspicuous person and the most agreeable of entertainers. . . . The evening passed pleasantly away, and I was launched into Farmington society.

As there were only three of us at the close of the entertainment, to escort the young ladies home, it was fortunate that Farmington was built almost entirely in one street, so one of us took the girls who went down street; one, those who went up the street, and a third those who branched off. Of these young ladies more than half bore one name, that of Cowles. I was told there were in that township three hundred persons of the name of Cowles. There were on the main street five families of brothers, in all of which I visited, and to whom I was indebted for many pleasant hours. . . . The time had now come for me to leave Farmington. My sleighrides, my parties, my pleasant visits, and, alas! my pleasant friends, were to be left forever. My path lay in different and sometimes far less pleasant scenes. I well remember the bright morning on which I stood on Mr. Pitkin's step, bidding farewell to my kind and gentle friend, Mary Pitkin.\* Married and moved away, she soon bade farewell to this world, where she seemed, like the morning flower, too frail and too gentle to survive the frost and the storm."

The vast range of amusements which now enter largely into social life were scarcely known sixty years ago. School exhibitions were the nearest approach to the theater, and card parties were held of doubtful morality. Deacon Bull, compiling material for Gov. Treadwell to use in his "Statistical History of Farmington," wrote what he knew of the amusements of the village, though both worthies probably knew less of amusements than of theology. He writes: "Their diversions and amusements are various, according to their different ages. The former generations had for their amusements the more athletic exercises, such as wrestling, hopping, jumping, or leaping over walls or fences, balls, quoits, and pitching the bar, also running and pacing horses, especially on public days when collected from all parts of the town. Some of these diversions are still in fashion, especially balls, but the most polite and fashionable amusements now are dancing at balls or assemblies, card-playing, and backgammon. There are also hunting and fishing, both by hook and seine. The mountains afford plenty of game, such as squirrels, partridges,

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\* Afterward the wife of John T. Norton, a native of Farmington, to which place he returned to reside before reaching middle age, after a period of very successful business in Albany. His wife died early. She was the mother of Prof. John P. Norton of Yale College, who also died before reaching middle age.—J. H.

and some turkeys and foxes. The river abounds with plenty of small fish, such as pike, trout, dace, etc. In this diversion gentlemen and ladies both unite, and in the pleasant part of the summer ride out to the most agreeable part of the meadow near the margin of the river, where are delightful shade trees with green and pleasant herbage for the accommodation of a large number of people to walk, fish, or eat, which renders the amusement delightful." Another out-of-door amusement was the Annual Field Day. This is how it impressed a quiet, unmilitary spectator. "September 25. Some rain. Review Day. Street full of men and horses and carriages and mud, etc. A regiment of cavalry was out and a part of the regiment of infantry. Afternoon. The troops marched off into the meadow and the town was quiet for two or three hours." A young girl observes, "In the afternoon rode out in the stage upon the Plain with seventeen in the stage. Stayed a few hours and became quite tired of field day. I was shocked to see the indelicacy with which some of my sex appeared. It wounded my delicacy to see girls of seventeen encircled in the arms of lads. From the field I repaired to the ball. I returned home about 12."

The most imposing anniversary was Independence Day, not then a day of license and vandalism, but a day when the old soldiers who knew well what independence cost, gathered with those who shared with them the blessing of freedom, and listened to the story of their valor, their sufferings, and their glorious victory, and all unitedly offered up to the God of Nations a people's thanksgiving. The exercises were the reading of the Declaration of Independence, prayer, an oration, and a patriotic anthem. The young people closed the day with a ball, and their elders had a dinner with formal toasts and much good cheer. Perhaps a school girl's account of one celebration is quite as good as the more formal reports occasionally given in the newspapers. "Wednesday the cannon arrived. Some of the artillery are expected. Friday went to the meeting-house at the time set, 11 o'clock. There I was an hour and a half or more before the troops arrived, who were all dressed in uniform and looked extremely well. They sang at meeting first Berkely; Dr. Todd and Hooker and Mr. Seymour played on their instruments. Next, Mr. Washburn made an excellent prayer, prayed that we might be truly thankful that our country still maintained its independence, and that if any came to meeting that day more for the



amusements of the day than for praise of God, that they might be pardoned. Next, Uncle Solly ascended the pulpit and read in their law book [the Declaration of Independence]. Next came Dr. Todd with his oration. It was a very good one, indeed. The exercises closed with a hymn which was composed for the occasion by Dr. Dwight, and sung to the tune of New One Hundred, written by Birkenhead's brother. Returned home and soon went back to the tea party opposite Mr. Wadsworth's. There was another in the next lot south. Danced until twelve, when the ball broke up. One hundred and fifty dined under a bowery at Gridley's." Thanksgiving, the best enjoyed of all old-time anniversaries, is briefly alluded to by the same person as follows: "Tuesday. Thanksgiving is coming and we are making preparations. We keep three days. Wednesday; have finished twenty-one pyes and some cake. I wished for your assistance to flour the tarts. Thursday attended meeting. The first I heard was 'Marriage is intended between Robert Porter and Roxanna Root, both of this place.' Heard a most excellent sermon by Mr. Washburn, in which he exhorted us in a most pathetic manner to embrace the gospel. The parties were married in the evening. Timothy carried round the cake and wine."

Weddings were mostly informal. We have one reported by Mr. Hooker, then a tutor in Yale College. "Attended the wedding of Richard Cowles and Fanny Deming at Mrs. Deming's. Large concourse of relations and friends, perhaps sixty. Not much ceremony. The parties were seated in the room when the company arrived. None stood up with them, but Mr. Camp and Caroline sat near them, and, after the ceremony, handed round two courses of cake, three of wine, and two of apples. The company in the different rooms then conversed half an hour, then those who could sing, collected and sung very handsomely a number of psalm tunes, and half an hour after had quite a merry cushion dance. I came away about nine, leaving still a large number capering around the cushion." Some of our older people may be able to explain the nature of a cushion dance, if they care to confess their youthful follies. I have an invitation given some time afterward to a wedding for Wednesday evening at 7 o'clock, on which the recipient years afterward wrote, 'A large assembly and a very pleasant evening, several college acquaintances present. After the old folks had gone we had a fine cushion dance, according to the fashion of our old Puritan fathers.'

At this latter wedding some one took Deacon Richards to task for drinking wine. 'Sir,' said the solemn deacon, 'I have the highest authority for drinking wine at weddings,' and, forthwith, drained his glass like the old soldier he was.

Ordinations with their solemn rites, their good cheer, and their closing ball, were notable days in the land. In this town they came about once in two generations. The Rev. John Richards, writing to his children years afterward, gives his recollections of one. "Dr. Porter," he says, "was ordained Nov. 5, 1806. I remember well how he looked in the pulpit, and how Dr. Dwight looked with his green spectacles while preaching the sermon. I sat directly behind Mr. Roberts, the singing master. Just before the close of the sermon Caty Mix fainted. 'There,' said Mr. Roberts to Col. Tillotson, 'we lose one of our best singers.' But they sang the Ordination Anthem notwithstanding, well. I was in raptures, especially at the verse :

' The saints unable to contain  
Their inward joys shall shout and sing;  
The Son of David here shall reign,  
And Zion triumph in her king.'

I knew not then, as I did long afterwards, the meaning of the words."

Besides these solemn festivals, other diversions of a lighter character occasionally though rarely enlivened the quiet of village life. Mr. Hooker records: "Dec. 12th. Snowy day. A large, tawny lion, a tall and beautiful Peruvian llama, an ostrich, and two or three monkeys were exhibited at Phelps's inn. To gratify my little daughter and son, I took them thither to see the animals. John rode the llama about the barn, while the keeper led the animal and I steadied the rider." Other occasional amusements, in which society of to-day does not indulge, sometimes came within reach of an easy drive from the village. In the same journal we read: "Tuesday, June 1, 1824. Very dry and warm, but otherwise pleasant. After early breakfast I took John and his cousin Samuel with me in the chaise and rode fifteen miles north to the town of Tolland, to witness the awful scene of an Indian man executed for murder. We arrived there about ten, and, after putting out the horse at Col. Smith's inn, walked up the hill half a mile to view the gallows and other preparations, and returned to the village which, by this time, had become filled with company.

Probably seven or eight thousand (and some say ten or twelve thousand) people were there. . . . The cavalry were on white horses and made an impressive show in the procession. There was a variety of musical instruments, drums, fifes, bassoons and bass viols, clarionets, etc.\*

One of New England's proud anniversaries was the college commencement. To this came the best culture of the land to do honor to the embryo statesmen and divines as they exhibited their learning in some unknown tongue to admiring parents and friends. The first student in Yale who arrived at the honor of a bachelor's degree was a Farmington boy, and the first tutor was our second minister's† son. The town has very frequently been represented on the commencement stage, but New Haven was a far country and too inaccessible to make the anniversary a popular one. Col. Isaac Cowles writes to his son about the difficulty of getting him home at the end of the college term: "I spoke to

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\*I remember well the incident which my father has here related. The cousin who was with me was Samuel S. Clarke of Columbia, Conn., who was at school at Mr. Hart's academy at Farmington, and was a member of our family. I was, at the time, 8 years old, and he 10. This paragraph from my father's journal is interesting as showing the great change in public opinion with regard to executions from that which prevailed at that time. The curiosity to witness such an awful spectacle was not a little barbarous and morbid, but there was a general feeling that such exhibitions would make a deep moral impression and be a strong deterrent from crime. It was with that feeling, I have no doubt, that my father took my cousin and myself to see this execution. There was a vast concourse of people from miles distant. The gallows was erected at the top of a hillock, where it could be seen by the surrounding thousands. There was not one in the great assemblage who could not see the wretched murderer swinging in the air. My father was not only very tender-hearted, but full of good sense with regard to such matters, and it is some surprise to me that he took us to see the distressing sight. It is to be said, as some excuse for the general desire to witness it, that it was a very rare thing that executions had taken place in this State, and there may have been some special atrocity in the perpetration of the crime that created an unusual interest on the part of the public in seeing the criminal punished. I was once telling the late Judge Waldo, of our Superior Court, about my attending the execution as a boy, when he told me that he was there. He must have been about 20 at the time. I have never seen the time when I would have taken my son to witness an execution, or would willingly have looked upon one myself. — J. H.

†Rev. Samuel Hooker, son of Thomas Hooker, the first minister at Hartford. He was settled over the Farmington church from 1760 till 1797, dying in his pastorate. — J. H.

Mr. W—— the other day respecting your getting home. He will lead down the bay mare for you to ride back. In that case you cannot bring your trunk home." At the end of next term he writes: "We send a few lines by Mr. C. Hope he will be sober when he delivers them. May he be a warning to you and all other youth. The Farmington East India Company will probably be loading their ship at vacation if the snow continues till that time. If not, shall get you home some other way. You must be a good boy. Don't let us hear any bad report of you." A young miss who mourned because her mother thought her too young to attend the Yale commencement the next summer, writes how her neighbors went to a similar entertainment: "The quality of Hartford and some of Farmington have gone to Dartmouth College to spend the commencement, viz., Chauncey Gleason, wife and daughter, Polly Cowles, and Sally Gleason, in one hack with a driver, and black Dick on horseback to officiate as servant. Mr. Howe and Mrs. Dolly Norton in a chaise." This repeated mention of "Black Dick" suggests the relation of society to the labor problem of those days, then, as always, an unsolved one. Who did the household drudgery then? Not labor-saving machinery. Not white servants. You might hire some strong-armed girl to do some well-defined work, such as spinning or weaving, for a limited time, but on an absolute social equality with the daughters of the house. Most families were large, and the work was divided among all the members, who thus became notable housekeepers in their turn. Indians could not be made servants of. They were removed too few generations from their untamed ancestors to bear dictation or continuous labor. The only servants were the blacks. The probate records of this town, which begin in 1769, show bequests of such valuable pieces of property as "A negro woman and boy as slaves." . . . "A negro man called Daff." . . . "A negro man called Gad." . . . "My negro boy called Cambridge." I have an original bill of sale, of which this is a copy: "Know all men by these presents that I, Samuel Talcott Junr. of Hartford, for the consideration of twenty-six pounds, ten shillings, to me paid or secured to be paid, have bargained and sold to James Wadsworth of Farmington one negro girl about the age of six years, named Candace, warranted sound and healthy and free from any claim of other person or persons, and the same warranted a slave for life. Dated at Hartford, September 30th, 1763." These un-

fortunate laborers, or fortunate as some thought them, were a few of them imported from the West Indies, but most came from Newport, which our Quaker brethren made the center of the New England slave trade. In 1711 slave-owners were compelled to support the slave in his old age, and not set him at liberty to take care of himself. In 1774 the importation of slaves was forbidden. Ten years later it was enacted that all born after 1784 should be free at the age of twenty-five, and in 1797 all when they arrived at the age of twenty-one. Black servants, therefore, in the period of which we write, were not slaves. Such was our fathers' solution of a difficult problem. The labor problem is still with us, and still we look forward to the final solution at the Millenium with great diversity of expectation.

No account of the social life of the village which leaves out the religious side can be complete. That, however, has been so fully and fairly treated of in the Half Century Discourse of Dr. Porter, that any attempt to add to or condense his account of what he more than all others was most qualified to write, seems presumptuous. One great change, however, in religious thought, since he wrote, cannot be overlooked. From 1821 to 1851 he records ten revivals, those great awakenings which in quick succession spread over the community, gathering all classes from their ordinary avocations, some in ecstatic elevation of soul and some in abject terror. That phase of religious belief can hardly be understood by the present generation. We now hear from the pulpit more of character and less of eternal punishment, more of the love of God and less of his wrath. Truth is eternal and the same. The same things are true to-day as two generations ago, but preachers and hearers alike do not universally and heartily believe the same things.

Such is an imperfect account of social life in the first part of this century. I have said little about it, preferring to leave the actors in the drama to tell their own tale in their own words. Of all the old diaries and letters which have furnished material for this paper, much the most valuable is the journal of Mr. Edward Hooker, some parts of which have been printed, but which ought to be published in its entirety. Other diaries afford vivid pictures of the times which have not been given to the public, will not be, I trust, and ought not to be. Every girl began one almost as soon as she could write. Here they recorded the events of every day, all their love affairs with great minuteness, and their

most sacred thoughts and aspirations. One of them began : " Diary. In the eleventh year of her age. To thee I will relate the events of my youth. I will endeavour to excel in learning and correct my faults so that I may be enabled to look backward with pleasure and forward with hope." And right well did she keep her resolutions until death early laid his hand on her as on many of the brilliant circle of her companions, and with trembling hand she records her last farewell to him she would have married, the last kindly words of Dr. Todd, and the last consolations of the saintly Washburn.

I have read with so great interest the admirable article of Mr. Gay that I cannot forbear to add a page or two with regard to my father and my own home life. I have spoken of him briefly in my introduction. There were a few men of education and refinement in Farmington in my early boyhood, who with him made up a very choice circle of intimate friends. Of these Dr. Eli Todd was perhaps the most brilliant. My father was very fond of him and deeply mourned his death a few years later when at the head of the insane asylum at Hartford. The Cowles brothers, who became the wealthy people of Farmington, were men of little cultivation, but of very great business enterprise and ability. It was generally reported and believed that they had made half a million in their business, and I think it was so. When the five brothers dissolved their partnership a few years later it was generally understood that each took \$100,000 as his share. This was a large sum for that time. They and their families were much given to free living and extravagance. With their relatives they gave a character to the town. My father had no fondness for display and no sympathy with them in their habits in this respect, although one of the five brothers married his sister. He had a competence, but nothing that could sustain extravagance. My recollection of our home life is of abundance, but of very plain living. Our clothes were made from the wool of our own sheep, which was fulled and woven at a mill within the town into a strong gray cloth, which was then made into suits of clothing by tailoresses who came around regularly for the season's work at our house. My father's clothes were made of the same material. He had a nice broadcloth suit for Sunday and public occasions, but I think his ordinary suits were cut by a tailor and made up by the tailoress. With this plain living we had a most healthful and inspiring mental life. My father was a rare Latin and Greek scholar, and began quite early to teach me those languages. I recollect well how, when I was a beginner in Latin, he asked me to read some book which I happened to be then reading, and how I, with much pride, answered "Ego sum." I meant by the "I am" to be understood as saying "I am reading that book." He laughed and then explained to me that "Ego sum" meant only "I *am*," in the sense of "I exist," and that I ought to have answered in some word meaning "I read." This illustrates his way of cor-

recting my early blunders. We had also at this time a study of English at our table. If any one of us children made a mistake either in our use of a word or in our grammar, he would instantly call our attention to it, and, by a rule which had been adopted for such cases, the one making the mistake was allowed a minute to correct it, and, he failing, any other of the children had the right to do so, and finally, all failing, he would himself correct the error and explain wherein it consisted. An account was kept among us. A failure corrected by the blunderer went for nothing, but if another child corrected it, the fact was set down to his credit and to the debit of the other. There was no forfeiture, but we all felt a great desire to have our account, when exhibited, a creditable one. We had at that time a table full of children, some cousins of mine, children of my father's sister, always attending the Farmington Academy as they became old enough, and finding a hospitable and pleasant home with us. We had rarely, through all my youth, fewer than two of them at a time.

I should perhaps make a wrong impression if I should be understood as reflecting at all upon the intelligence of the people of the town who did not belong to the ambitious and fashionable circle, nor to that of the highly educated and cultivated. They were generally intelligent, availing themselves of all the opportunities for education that then existed, and very generally patronizing the village library. This association held monthly meetings on a Sunday evening at the librarian's, where the members drew out several books for the month. These meetings were quite largely attended by the older people in the parlor and by us boys in the kitchen. They were very enjoyable times, and I rarely failed to attend with my father. The services on Sunday, in the Congregational church, the only one in the village, were largely attended. The huge church was always well filled, and very few stayed away. The outlying districts for several miles had no other place of worship, and their residents came in large wagons and carriages, generally whole families coming and bringing all their children.

My father appears by his journal to have been very familiar with the fashionable people of the town, and with the attractive young women, of whom there were so many; but he never had a particle of their love of display and was never moved a particle from his simplicity of life.

Such a home life makes a great and abiding impression on a child of ordinary intelligence, and it saddens me to think how little is left of it for the coming generations.

J. H.





JOHN BLACKLEACH

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AN  
HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

Annual Meeting

OF

The Village Library Company

OF

Farmington, Connecticut

September 13, 1911

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By JULIUS GAY

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Hartford Press

THE CASE, LOCKWOOD & BRAINARD COMPANY

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## ADDRESS.

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*Ladies and Gentlemen of the Village Library Company of Farmington:* It is now seven years since I had the honor to read to you the last of a series of papers giving some account of the early life of the village,—its libraries and schools, the houses which sheltered the early settlers, the soldiers who protected them in colonial days and during the long war of the Revolution, of the music of the sanctuary and of the social habits of the worshipers. A new chapter in the history of the village green has just begun. The town meeting of September 2d has practically decreed that Church and State are no longer one.

While great changes may be in abeyance, let us call to mind, for a few minutes, things most dear to our ancestors,—the Meeting House Green and the three houses in which successively they worshiped God. The masterly account of the third and last house by President Porter in his address of 1872 is well known to you all. I remember also, as if it were only yesterday, sitting in the North gallery of the meeting house full to overflowing and listening to his "Historical Discourse of 1840," and seem to remember the very tones of his voice as he concluded with the words: "As we look back along the dim path-way of their darkness and danger in the past, we behold the bright token of his presence and care, in the words which the three vines planted on the Connecticut, delighted to bear aloft upon their banner: 'Qui transtulit sustinet.' As we look forward to the days that are to come, we behold them as they brighten in the distance, splendid in their tokens of future promise. Yes, he who brought them over will still uphold; not them, for they are dead, and so are

their sons, and their son's sons; but their principles, their spirit and their honored names.

The first meeting-house, the first of three, stood on the main street midway between mountain and river. The worshippers were then, and for the next quarter of a century, summoned to attend by beat of drum. The deacons still lined out the psalm, and musical instruments and dissensions in the choir were unknown. Of the style of architecture in this old building we know little. There were doors on the east and south, and probably on the west. Negroes sat upon a bench at the north end, and, as the capacity of the house became less and less sufficient, individuals were allowed to build themselves seats anywhere in the gallery, "on condition that they do not damnify the other seats in the meeting-house." The allotment of seats below was termed dignifying the house, and the seating committee was ordered to "have respect to age, office, and estate, so far as it tendeth to make a man respectable." The youths and the unmarried were forced upstairs where they gave the tithingman sufficient occupation. There was one exception in favor of certain sedate young women. "The town by vote gave liberty to Lieutenant Judd's two daughters, and the Widow Judd's two daughters, and the two eldest daughters of John Steele to erect, or cause to be erected, a seat for their proper use at the south end of the meeting-house at the left hand as they go in at the door, provided it be not prejudicial to the passage and doors." Seats too were reserved for the guard of eight men who marched in with muskets at shoulder. The Indian atrocities at Deerfield and vicinity were but recent, and the meeting-house itself had long been a fort as well as a house of prayer. In 1674 Deacon Bull makes a charge for a joist for the fort gate of the church, and in 1675 for the irons of the fort gate, and again in 1676.

The green was used as the parade ground for the military companies of the village, and from its pulpit in times of war,

stirring discourses sent the soldiers forth to battle. The eloquence of the beloved Pitkin was a power in the land. One of his discourses was from the words "Play the man for your country, and the cities of your God; and the Lord do that which seemeth Him good." In times of peace we read of it as "the place of parade or mustering in said Farmington, where Capt. Hawley usually trains his company," and similar records are frequent. There was once a belief, never wholly disproved, that the first meeting-house stood opposite the house of Admiral Cowles, where lived the Rev. Samuel Hooker, second minister of Farmington and probably his brother-in-law, Rev. Roger Newton, its first minister. William Hooker, grandson of Rev. Thomas Hooker, owned the property where Admiral Cowles now resides. On his death his widow Susannah married John Blackleach, a Hartford merchant who lived on the place and to whom the town gave "liberty to take up four acres of land where he can find it," that is provided he remains in town four years. He was the grandson of John Blackleach of Hartford, farmer, merchant, ship-owner, philanthropist, writer on theology, and ancestor of many worthy people of Hartford. I propose to give you a brief account of him as a very interesting character apart from his relationship as grandfather of our ancient townsman of the same name.

We first hear of him as joint owner with the noted Samuel Maverick of a plantation known as Winnissimmet on the north side of the Mystic River immediately east of the present site of the United States Marine Hospital in Chelsea. Mr. Maverick, an early and noted settler of Massachusetts, in the manuscripts which have come down to us, describes it as "Two miles south from Romney Marsh on the north side of Mystic river in Winnissimmet, which though a few houses on it, deserves to be mentioned. One house yet standing there which is the ancientest house in this Massachusetts government, a house which in the year 1625, I (that is, Samuel

Maverick), fortified with a palisado and flankers, and guns both below and above in them, which awed the Indians, who at that time had a mind to cut off the English. They once faced it but receiving a repulse, never attempted it more."

Samuel Maverick and Amias his wife and John Blackleach and his wife sold the place in February, 1634, to Richard Bellingham and also an interest in the ferry. When Mr. Blackleach arrived in New England, or how either he or Mr. Maverick obtained a grant of Winnissimmet or of the ferry has escaped much research by learned historians of that vicinity. Mr. Blackleach may have been a resident of London, for before 1644 he had married Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Bacon, formerly of Wapping but afterward of "the parish of St. Katherine Cree Church, London, Gunner of His Majesty's good ship or vessel called the *Mare Honor*."

In February, 1635, the freemen of Salem granted Mr. Blackleach three hundred acres more at Long Marsh along the seaside and containing half the marsh. Of this, fifty acres was rock, but that he might have sufficient ground to maintain a plow, they gave him in 1638 fifty acres more, conditionally that he will be at the charge of plowing it, or the greatest part of it. Such were the inducements held out to the incoming farmers of England. At this time there were said to be but thirty-seven plows in all Massachusetts.

In May, 1635, he was made a freeman by the General Court at Boston, to which body he was a deputy from Salem in May of the following year. About this time he made a voyage to England and back, beguiling the way by writing a work on theology. He calls it a treatise, and sends it to Gov. Winthrop at Hartford with an introductory letter, which the Governor endorses August 3, 1637, and which opens thus:

"Great and many are the reasons (Right Worshipful), that moved upon the vast and troubled ocean sea, to study and commit to writing the following discourse. . . . These following notes have cost me much pains, and some time, to



gather them together, and to commit them to writing. I pray you let it not be grievous to you to read them. It may be that something herein may seem harsh (I am but a mortal man, therefore subject to error), yet I believe what I have written to be truth, otherwise I would not have tendered it to your consideration. . . . I humbly pray that when you have perused the following treatise, you will restore it to me again." Probably this request was granted, as the treatise is not to be found among the Blackleach papers of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Mr. Blackleach returned to Salem and seems to have added the mercantile to his agricultural business, for in March, 1637-8, he pays an excise duty of four pounds, three shillings and four pence on wine bought and sold by him. We lose sight of him until in May, 1644, the records of the General Court inform us that "Mr. Blackleach, his petition about the Moors was consented to, to be committed to the elders to inform us of the mind of God herein, and then to further consider it." This was the first of his philanthropic schemes of which we have any record, and refers to his wish to instruct certain negroes in religion. The case of Mrs. Hutchinson was too freshly in mind for anyone to presume to meddle with religious teaching without due authority. These Africans were a source of great perplexity to the good people of Massachusetts and had been brought to Boston on this wise. Gov. Winthrop, in his History of New England informs us that in the winter of 1645 Mr. James Smith "who was a member of the church of Boston with his mate Keyser were bound to Guinea to trade for negroes, but when they arrived there, they met with some Londoners, with whom they consorted, and the Londoners having been formerly injured by the natives, (or at least pretending the same), they invited them aboard one of the ships upon the Lord's day, and such as came they kept prisoners, then landed men, and a murderer, and assaulted one of their towns and killed many of the people, but the country

coming down, they were forced to retire without any booty, divers of their men being wounded with the negroe's arrows and one killed."

Arriving at Barbadoes, on their return in their ship Rain-bow, Captain Smith and his mate Keyser quarrelled. The latter seized the ship and returned to Boston with the negroes and cargo, leaving Smith to get home as best he could. Get home, however, he did, and brought suit against his late partner. The court allowed him substantial damages against Keyser, but, on the other hand, ordered that " Captain Smith should allow Keyser ten pounds for threatening to pistol him." Gov. Winthrop adds " For the matter of the negroes, whereof two were brought home on the ship and near one hundred slain by the confession of some of the mariners, the magistrates took order to have these two set at liberty, and to be sent home; but for the slaughter committed, they were in great doubt what to do in it, seeing it was in another country, and the Londoners pretended a just revenge. So they called the elders, and desired their advice." Richard Saltonstall, therefore, being an Assistant in the General Court, reported the act of murder and the act of stealing negroes contrary to the law of God and of this country " but the act of chasing the negroes as aforesaid upon the Sabbath Day, being a servile work is expressly capital by the law of God." Ultimately one negro was given by Captain Smith to Mr. Williams of Piscataqua, and the General Court ordered the other, called the negro interpreter, to be sent to his native country of Guinea with a letter of indignation. To whom this letter was to be addressed is not stated, and how good a christian Mr. Blackleach made of the bearer does not appear. His efforts were however so far approved that a new door was speedily opened to his pious endeavors. In April, 1657, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England writes from its London office of the " information we have received of the abilities of and good affection of Mr. John Black-

leach, whose heart we are persuaded is engaged herein, to commend him to your approbation as a person whom we think may be useful and serviceable in civilizing the Indians and also helpful to inform them in the knowledge of the gospel." In the meantime while the catechism and bible and other good books were being translated into Algonkin, Mr. Blackleach is recorded a resident in Salem as late as September, 1651. Thence he removed to Boston in time to have his house and goods burned in the great fire of March 14, 1653, which Endicott calls "the most dreadful fire that I ever saw." Some mercantile business brings him to New Haven where he spent the winter of 1658, and where he made himself so agreeable to Mr. Davenport and his wife, who had never seen him before, that they gave him liberty to lay up his barrels of pork and corn, etc., that were to be paid him for his goods, in the garret of the house of Governor Winthrop, absent in Hartford. To the latter he writes a letter of apology, proposing "to come to Hartford the first opportunity, when the rivers are open about March next. Desiring the Lord to bless, guide, and keep you and yours." To Hartford therefore he came and bought a house and lot of Elder William Goodwin who had removed to Hadley. It was situated on the North side of the Riveret and on the East side of the road from the Pallisado to the Sentinel Hill, or in modern phraseology, on the northeast corner of the intersection of Main and Arch Streets. Mr. Blackleach seems to have met with the too common prejudice against new comers. The General court in March, 1661, "having weighed and considered the nature of the offence of Mr. John Blackleach in his contemptuous expressions against several persons in authority in this colony. . . . doth impose the fine of thirty pounds to be paid by the said Mr. Blackleach to the public treasury." To what particular worshipful magistrate Mr. Blackleach had failed in respect we cannot say, but speaking contemptuously of those in authority was pretty serious busi-

ness. Good men held with the Apostle Jude that the dreamers who speak evil of dignities should be ranked among the ungodly. After a little delay and the exercise of common sense the wrath of the Court was appeased and they found his prosecutors guilty of prejudice, of lying on wait, and suspecting that "both Loveridge and Burnam guilty of the same crime they testify against Mr. Blackleach, . . . cannot but see just cause to acquit Mr. Blackleach of that fine imposed." Here then he remained or made his headquarters for the last twenty years of his life, making voyages mercantile and philanthropic to foreign lands. His acquaintance with the Governor seems to have been mutually agreeable, and the latter in a letter dated Hartford, January 27, 1664-5 to Sir Robert Moray, communicating certain scientific statements made by Mr. Blackleach to his honor's consideration and to that of the Royal Society of which the Governor was a member and founder, first announces his own astronomical discoveries as follows, "Having looked upon Jupiter with a telescope upon the 6th of August last, I saw five satellites very distinctly about that planet." This is one more satellite than any other observer has reported. "I observed it with the best curiosity I could, taking a very distinct notice of the number of them. . . . Another thing I make bold to mention, upon occasion of a relation which I had lately from an understanding seaman that hath been master of some vessels and often in the West Indies, (Mr. John Blackleach) He affirmed confidently that being in the Gulf of Florida, he saw a great pillar of water (which is commonly called spouts), rise up from the sea, and rise higher till it joined itself to a white cloud over it. I urged it to him to be a mistake. . . . He confidently affirmed it could be no mistake, his ship was near, and that both himself and all on the ship with one consent judged it to rise out of the sea." As between the Governor's five satellites and Mr. Blackleach's water spout, the latter's scientific accuracy is to be commended.

In October, 1667, he was back in Hartford where "This Court grants Mr. John Blackleach liberty to retail wine and liquors to his neighbors that are honest, sober householders, and these only, till the last of November next."

For five years we read of no more voyages, but in the quiet of Hartford, his old interest of twelve years before in the spiritual welfare of the Indians again takes possession of him. "Mr. Blackleach Senior," so it is recorded, "moving the Court for their approbation that he might use his endeavors to make known to the Indians (in the best way he can), something of the knowledge of God according as he shall have opportunity, This Court grants his desire therein, with their desires that he may, through the blessing of God be an advantageous instrument to the end proposed." In November, 1669, he reports progress to the Governor. "Mr. Winthrop, Much Honored Governor. My due respect to you Sir. You may remember that at the last General Court, God gave me so much favor in the hearts of the Court that they approved me to speak and act to and with the Indians to reduce them to civility and Christianity. I have studied and taken some pains in the matter and in my thoughts and actings I do endeavor the further progress therein. Mr. Elliot gave me an Indian Bible and divers other books in the Indian tongue and added his prayers for my good success therein. . . . Now Sir, this is to request you to be a friend to me; it will cause me to proceed with more ease; however, my purpose is to do my endeavor herein, because I do delight in the work, believing that the work is acceptable to God. Thus, desiring God to bless, guide, and keep you, I rest.

Yours to be commanded in all Christian duty.

John Blackleach, Senior.

Laus Deo.

New York 10. November 1669."

How proficient he became in the Algonkin tongue or how much the natives were benefitted is not related. His health failed him and in October, 1671, he writes from Jamaica to the Governor.

"Much Honored Sir, My due respects presented to you, to your wife, and to all yours,

"Sir, knowing your ingenuity, I thought it might not be unacceptable unto you to impart to you a brief of passages observed by me during the present voyage hitherto—one month from Nantasket, near Boston, very temperate and good winds and weather, otherwise I fear I should hardly been able to endure it. We fell in with the easternment part of Hispaniola, intending to have first made Porto Rico, but thereby we were necessitated to pass by on the north side of Hispaniola, which probably tended to our safety, for another vessel from New York passing on the south side was taken by a Spanish ship and plundered of part what they had. . . . If I had stayed in New England this winter, my present condition considered, I could not see other than that I was like to be a burden to myself and friends. As for the various and sharp afflictions with which it has pleased God to exercise me with, for divers years past, I could patiently have borne and waited for deliverance and not have come to this place, but I believed I might please God in this voyage." Probably domestic troubles added to his despondency. His second son Benoni, a young man of 27, had given offense to a citizen of Wethersfield by certain writings and pictures, for which a kindly reprimand might have sufficed, but being tried in a public assembly he was enraged and the magistrate for "his unsuitable bold carriage here in the court do adjudge him to pay as a fine for his misdeameaning himself five pounds . . . and carry good behavior till the court in December next." A kindly neighbor, one Mrs. Wickham, gave bonds for him, and at the December court it was recorded "there was nothing appeared against Benoni Blackleach at

this court." Nevertheless neither Benoni nor the magistrate would give in, and so Benoni disappeared forever. The record reads " Benoni Blackleach appeared not and so his father forfeited the bond of twenty pounds." Deeds and wills conveying Blackleach property for many years contain such clauses as " It is thought Benoni may be alive." Probably he went to sea and like many another young man from the river towns was never heard from. His third son Solomon had become a seaman, and not long afterward the Rev. John Cotton writes from Plymouth to the Rev. Increase Mather: " About a fortnight since came into our harbor a privateer under command of one Capt. Daniel. The Master is Solomon Blackleach, son to the old man once resident in Boston. They stole away Rodes (that is, John Rodes), from New York. I doubt many hellish abominations are here acted in secret by those who have not the fear of God before their eyes. They pretend a commission from the States of Holland, and design to take French vessels in your eastern parts." It is but just to the memory of Solomon Blackleach to say that an account of the trial for the condemnation of the James Frigate is given at length on Plymouth Colony Records and a list of everything in her including six great guns and ending with one grindstone. The only objectionable person or thing found was a convict spoken of by Rev. John Cotton named John Rodes who had escaped from a New York jail and whom the court speedily sent whence he came. The court suspected that Solomon commanded by virtue of a Dutch commission and found " that it would be of ill consequence to abet, harbor, or assist those who in show profess an open enmity to the French, our neighbors, with whom we ought to hold." In short, privateering against the Spanish flag was rewarded with high official position and honored with knighthood, as we shall see, but against any other nation was a hellish abomination. Solomon Blackleach died shortly after reaching Plymouth, having made a will in which he orders:

"I bequeath my soul to God who gave it, my body to the dust, and my estate to my dear and loving wife Sindeniah."

In Jamaica our philanthropist found a wide, if not a profitable field for his religious zeal. Here was no Governor Winthrop or General Court to encourage him. Jamaica was still the rendezvous of English as was St. Domingo, of French privateers, buccaneers, or pirates as you choose to regard them, the treaty of Madrid in 1670 to the contrary. Spanish galleons, merchandise, cities, towns, anything Spanish they held fair game. Mr. Blackleach narrates with considerable minuteness the departure from Jamaica and subsequent fiendish exploits of some five hundred buccaneers under the noted Welshman, Henry Morgan, whom Charles II afterward knighted and made Deputy Governor of Jamaica. Those of us who read Harper's Magazine fifty years ago will perhaps remember an account of Morgan by the Rev. J. T. Headley, profusely illustrated by an artist who portrays him as a courtly soldier listening to the appeal of a beautiful woman. Let all such turn to Justin Winsor's Narrative and Critical History of America for a copy of an original painting of the real Sir Henry Morgan.

The profanity of these men, of which he records certain choice specimens, shocked the good old man. "In those raging fits," he says, "I have taken occasion to exhort them to repentance, and have found that all, or all but one, have fallen under and manifested some repentance."

"It is a difficult matter to fasten a word of exhortation, because no man may dispense a word without order from England." At all events the voyage seems to have greatly improved his health, for in November of the next year he entered into partnership with Richard Lowe by whom he is directed to purchase what fish or other goods are needed (besides the fish already bought in Salem), for the Ketch Blessing, thence to proceed to Bilboa, Spain, to sell his cargo, and thence to some part of France, where it may be most ad-



vantageous to lay out the proceeds in linen cloth, and whatever else may be best, and thence directly to Boston.' Blackleach as partner is to have no wages, but instead ten per cent. on the sale of Lowe's portion in Bilboa and five per cent. ditto in Boston."

Illustrative of the uncertainties of Hartford ventures by sea at this time we have two years afterward on the 30th of July, 1674, a lease by Richard Lord and John Blackleach of Hartford and John Ruck of Salem to Richard Wharton of Boston, of "The good Ketch called the John and Sarah of Salem of the burthen of seventy tons or thereabout now riding at anchor in the harbor of Salem, . . . for five months certain, or ten months uncertain, for a voyage to be made with her, by God's assistance," from Salem to Boston, thence to Cape Sable and "then with the first opportunity of wind and weather to the port of Rochelle, Nantz, or Bordeaux in the Kingdom of France or to all or any of them for the delivery of her fish and receipt of her loading for Boston aforesaid." . . . "But in case Samuel Pickman, master of the said Ketch, shall, before his arrival in any of the ports in France, have certain information of wars raised between England and France that then the said master shall sail to the kingdom of Portugal, Spain, or England or either of them."

In 1675, in the midst of the Indian war known as King Philip's, Mr. Blackleach is on a committee for the protection of Hartford, and the Council orders them to place flankers in or near the outside houses of the town so that they may be able to command from flanker to flanker round the town. Two years later he signs an agreement with Richard Lord to act as master of the ship Hartford on a voyage to the West Indies. In 1678 he makes a voyage to Madeira, Barbadoes, and home to New England, sailing from Barbadoes in the Ketch Mayflower with his son John for Boston, there fitting out the ship for another voyage to Madeira in December, 1679. This

may have been his last voyage. He was now an old man, and giving over his wanderings and religious enterprises, he settled in Wethersfield and there died August 23, 1683, following to the grave his wife Elizabeth who had preceded him the previous month. In an age which glorifies visible achievements, his well meant endeavors for the good of his fellow men may seem visionary, but he certainly gained the respect and esteem of such men as Rev. John Davenport of New Haven and of Gov. John Winthrop. Wait Winthrop, son of the governor, writes to Fitz-John Winthrop February 26, 1688-9, about the expediency of a marriage between some of the younger members of the families and says "I have always had a particular friendship to the old gentlemen."

Mr. Blackleach senior left a son born in 1635, commonly known as Captain John, like his father a merchant and shipper. He was, so far as appears, a worthy man. His son John, as already stated, married Susanna, widow of William Hooker. Mary, daughter of Captain John, married three times, first Thomas Welles of Hartford, son of Thomas and grandson of Thomas the settler, from which marriage came children and grandchildren. She married second John Olcott of Hartford, son of Thomas the settler, and had four children. She married third Capt. Joseph Wadsworth of Charter Oak fame by whom she had no children. The name Blackleach has disappeared from modern New England literature, partly from the excess of female descendants who lost the name in marriage, partly, perhaps, by the removal to other states of those who bore it, and partly no doubt by the interference of some spelling reformer.

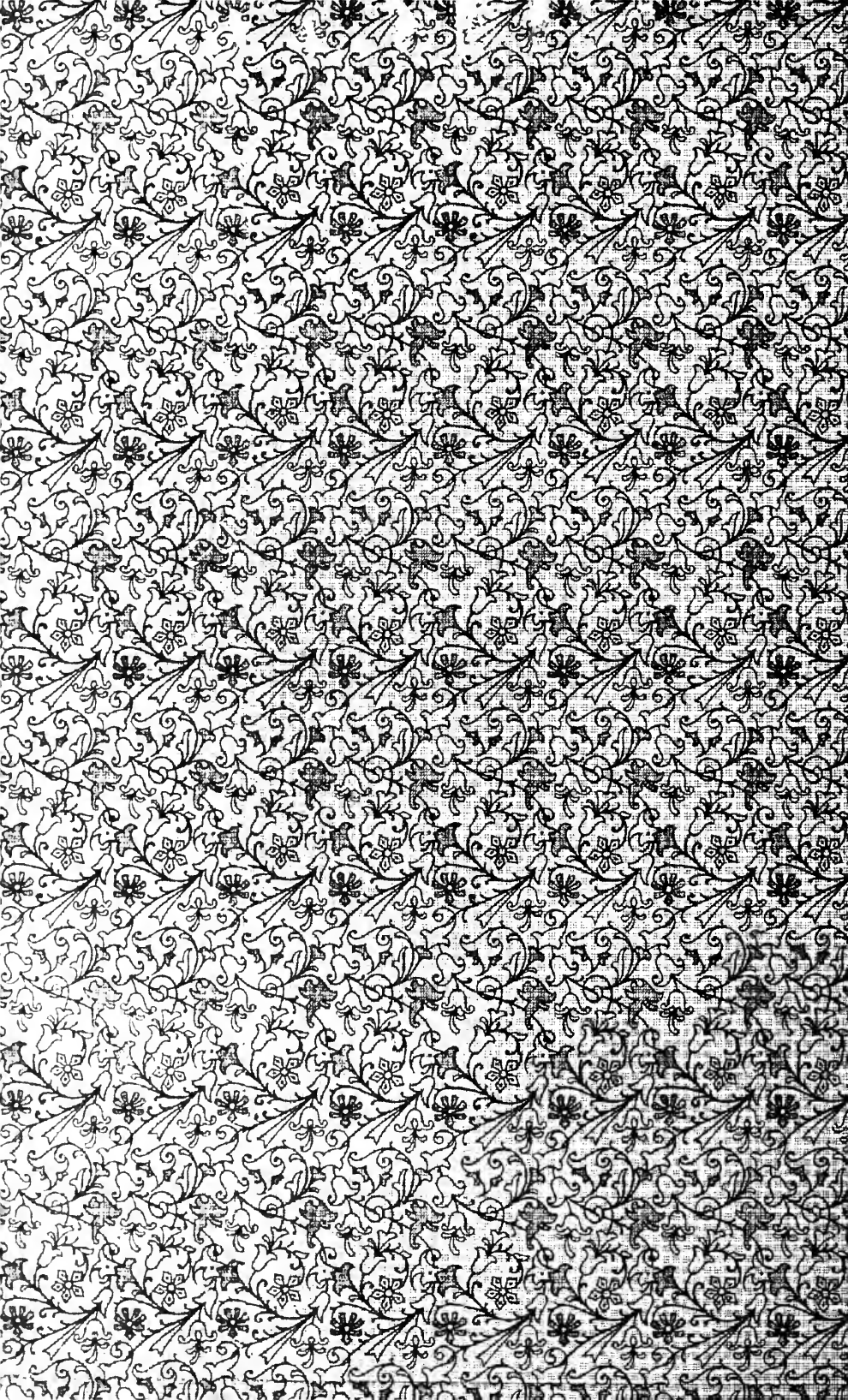














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